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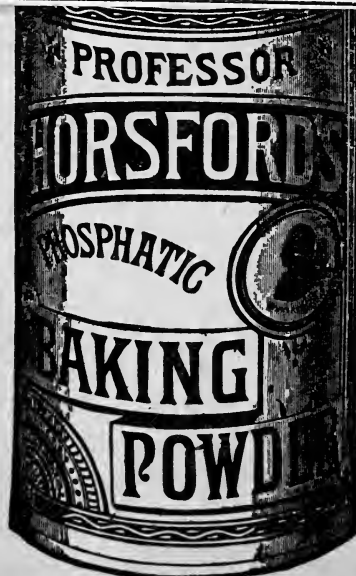
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# ANNA MARIA'S HOUSE-KEEPING

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Author of "Children's Etiquette," "Ugly Girl Papers," etc



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# ANNA MARIA'S HOUSE-KEEPING.

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## I.—HOW TO MAKE HOUSEWORK EASIER.

ANNA MARIA said the other day she would like to know if there really was any way of making housekeeping easier, short of shirking it altogether. If there was any improvement she thought people couldn't know it any too soon. She read all the plans for making work lighter, but for them you must build a new apartment-house, with steam heat and pneumatic tubes to send groceries home and shoot the dinner up from the great central bake-house and kitchen, which was to be somewhere in the same square. She wondered if the meals wouldn't get cold on the way, and how you'd ever make cake light if you had to send it six or eight

doors off before you could put it in the oven. She wasn't just at liberty to join coöperative schemes, and if she was she didn't know how somebody else's way of housekeeping would suit hers. She distinctly belonged to the common sort, who don't keep a man and a maid, but do everything "menial" for themselves, who don't drink tea from Japanese teacups, or eat dessert on painted china, who use red and white tablecloths for breakfast and lunch, and glass goblets at a dollar a dozen, but who like nice order and dainty housekeeping as well as people who have lace tea-cloths and cloissonnè or Minton ware. She never even belonged to a "family" to speak of—her grandfather wasn't a judge nor a bishop, nor even a wholesale grocer; she thought it was a very great neglect on the part of her father and mother not to provide their children with distinguished ancestors and heirloom china and silver coffeepots—but it couldn't be helped. They had only been hard-working, honest, respectable folks, who lived in a rented house and had baked beans every Sunday and salt-fish twice a week. That was *their* standard of elegance. All the same Anna Maria thought she enjoyed reading

Longfellow and Miss Caroline Fox's journal, and making macrame toilet sets, and planting rose-cuttings and carnations in the clematis border, possibly not as well as if she came of an old family, but just as well as she could, being herself. She didn't know how she could be happier than she was, if only the housework didn't take up so much time from reading and rose-planting and rose-knitting. She and her mother couldn't do like the ladies in stories, who lived alone in a cottage or in lodgings, and went around dusting things with the tips of their fingers; who breakfasted on an egg and slip of toast, and washed the china on the mahogany table, and left everything else to the convenient charwoman who comes in every day to do all the rest of the work. It must be rather expensive, if she charged a dollar and a half a day, like Mrs. Mulvany who went out to day's work in their neighborhood. Anna Maria always had a woman to wash and scrub, but that woman was herself. She didn't mind the work, but she hated taking so much time paring potatoes and making cookies, and cleaning out the sink and clearing the table three times a day, when there were so

many pleasant things to be done in the world. And she hated having her hands red and rough, so that they caught the silk of her embroidery, and shamed the white pages of her diary when she wrote in it.

Anna Maria is our neighbor's daughter, a nice girl with shrewd, sensible ways, who goes to the High School, and stands well in the Latin class, and is specially good, her teacher says, in Political Economy and Rhetoric. She helps her mother, does much of the sewing, and has the finest cinerarias and cyclamen abloom in her windows this February of anybody in town. As Darius Perkins says, *all* her sense don't run to seed in books. She knows plenty about things, as well as other people's ideas about them.

Anna Maria is rather a favorite with me, and I wish we could find some way to help her. She doesn't want a hired girl—the last one they had turned up her nose because the family hadn't a velvet carpet or a plated silver tea-set, and weren't, as she phrased it, "highly connected." When she left it took Anna Maria and her mother a straight week of housecleaning to get things in order, the closets sweet and



the paint bright, and they never will get the grease-spot out of the wall where she hung the hams against the wall-paper. Anna Maria says the whole house smelled of hired girl while she was in it, and you could not open the front door without a draft of beans or onions, fried cakes or burnt something rushing at you. Between the two crosses she would rather endure the work than the help, but *need* it take all one's time just to feed and clean and feed again? That is what she would like to know.

Dear Anna Maria, it need not. There are hosts of helps nowadays—help that don't have unpleasant habits, that don't sing "Pinafore" and the "Sweet By and By" at the top of their voice from cellar to roof-tree, or smell of burnt fat, or wipe the bread knife on their aprons. If you spent about a quarter of what a girl's wages would amount to for a year in *these* helps, you would find, I think, that cooking and cleaning needn't take all your time. When a carpenter wants to do good work, and fast work, he looks out to have the best tools in the best order, and the first thing you want is to have your tools, good, bad or indifferent, in the best order they will allow.

The greatest help I know of in housekeeping is a sharp knife. It saves time paring vegetables and cutting meat or bread. So Anna Maria wants to get her father to sharpen the carving knife and the kitchen knife and the little paring knife, and she wants an oil-stone to keep them sharp. A kitchen grindstone which sits on a table and turns in a japanned iron trough, is a very great help, and it only costs a dollar and lasts a generation.

Then, Anna Maria, you want a very solid meat-block on three legs, that will stand pounding, hacking and sawing, on which you can trim your joints of meat, crack bones for soup, chop hash—or no; for that you want a small sausage grinder. No dishes are nicer than those of meat or vegetables divided very finely, for the flavor spreads, and the fibre cooks better, and the food is easier of digestion than in solid form.

Broad saucepans and frying pans are best for cooking quickly. To fry potatoes or hominy or cakes for breakfast with a common "spider," or skillet, is miserably slow compared with the way you can turn them off from the broad griddle, which gives

every slice a chance to brown. Use a cake turner for lifting everything that is fried, if you want to save time, and take them up in neat, whole slices instead of slovenly flakes.

You need not burn your face over the kitchen stove if you only use a long, wooden-handled fork, such as the shops have for ten cents, and a long spoon for cooking. Let me tell you one thing; when you have baking and work over the stove, rubbing the face with sweet oil, glycerine, or vaseline, is very good to prevent that dryness and harshness of the skin which ruins faces early. You need not make your face to shine with it like a Central African, but rub a little into the skin after washing it and drying well, and wipe off all that shows on the cheeks.

I know that sifting the coal ashes and blacking the stove are Anna Maria's greatest dread; they are so disagreeable. Her people are talking of buying a new range, and I hope that they will have one of those which screen the cinders before taking out the ashes. There are two or three screens in use which will sift ashes without as much dust as you would make sweeping the kitchen, and they cost a dollar

each. A quarter of another week's wages of a first-class hired girl gone for that, and the life long dread of cinder sifting banished, and a quarter of the coal saved in a year. For the stove, nothing is better than the Brunswick black, the dull but beautiful finish of the best Berlin iron, used for fine grates. It is a varnish kept by dealers in high-class fire fittings, and costs fifty cents a quart, which will blacken all the grates and stoves in the house, only it won't do for sheet iron. When that is rusty rub it with a file or sand, and polish with common stove blacking mixed with turpentine varnish. Use this only when the stove is cold and the fire out, or the turpentine may blaze and burn you. Rub the moldings of your stoves with the Berlin black, and polish the top of the cook stove, as fast as it burns red, with the Magic blacking, which needs no hard rubbing to make it bright.

Now for the dishwashing, in which you want to save time and save your hands too. I have washed dishes so often without wetting my hands till it was time to wring out the towels, that I'm sure Anna Maria can do it too with practise. Dishes well

scraped and piled at the left of the dish pan, the wooden drainer at the right, next the broad shelf under the slide window into the china closet, and there is no time lost going backward and forward with things. You save time in housekeeping by seconds and half minutes, but by the day's end they count in hours. If you can't wash the dishes immediately, cover them with water, wash and wipe the silver which will get dull by standing, and leave the rest till convenient. Plenty of hot water and soap, plenty of clean towels, and the little white dishmop, make washing dishes rather easy, pleasant work. But the tin pans and the stove ware! How to save time and tribulation, listen to what I tell you. As soon as anything is cooked, empty kettle or pan, and pour in cold water at once, before a crust has time to form. When you find the hours of scraping and scouring saved by this simple care, you will be out of patience with careless folks who neglect it, to say nothing of keeping the tin boilers and saucepans in good order, by this plan. Wash kettles and cooking ware with the steel dishcloth of flexible rings linked together, which do the work of twenty scrapers,

only you must fasten a wooden handle to it to keep your hands out of the hot water and the soda or lye you must use to keep the utensils nice. Rinse them all — I rinse my cooking things whether I do my plates or not, to keep them from any possibility of giving the taste of one day's cooking to the next. Then wipe tin and iron with coarse towels kept for them, to save your hands from wringing the dishcloth over and over. To save time, scald your tinware and dry it in the open oven or in the hot sun, turning it upside down to drain.

If you want to know how much is saved by these little things, just time yourself by the clock and find how long it takes to do up the work mornings, how long to wash the dishes, how many minutes to sweep, how many to clean and polish stove, faucets, or any little brightening and scouring which always comes to hand. Then see how long you are sweeping and putting the sitting-room in order, and doing the chamber work. Nothing stimulates and guides work like timing it by the clock. You will find as other girls have found before you, that the kitchen work which may last two hours can be briskly and com-



fortably done in three quarters of an hour, and that chambers and sitting-room can be made perfectly neat in half an hour. Of course this provides for a way of doing work very different from that of the æsthetic damsels in stories who wave a feather duster daintily and gingerly over the parlor ornaments for their forenoon's work. I've seen a young woman packing her trunk for a journey who was just thirty-five minutes folding and rolling up six pairs of red cotton stockings. I had the curiosity to glance at the time while she was about it. This was her usual gait and manner of doing things, very precise, very ladylike, never hurried, and intolerably slow. I hope when you pride yourselves on your ideal ladyhood, it won't include being so elegantly slow. There is too much to do, to enjoy, to learn in life not to get the fullest of our privileges, and the most of our time. You will find that you gain in a week's practise, by looking at the clock every ten minutes. It is the same kind of a check on dawdling or wasting moments that keeping an account is upon spending money. The waste stares you in the face, and shames or grieves you into doing better.

Learn all the swift ways chemistry provides for doing your work. If you want bright tin and brass and steel, as of course you do, you need not spend hours in scouring them. A ten-cent can of potash, and a sixpenny cake of sapolio, pride of the kitchen, or mineral soap, which are white and pleasant to use, will do the work for you. Dissolve a tablespoonful of potash in a gallon of boiling water in an iron kettle; in this lye boiling hot dip all rusty articles for an instant or two till the spots look bright, then rinse at once, wash, and wipe dry. If a kettle or saucepan is burnt inside, pour in a cup of this lye, and scald till the crust comes off. Have you a rusty or greasy old jar to cleanse — wash it first, then fill with hot lye and let it stand half a day. Keep a jar or firkin of lye beside the sink, for you will want it for all sorts of things — taking rust from brass, iron and tin, cleaning pails, taking grease out of floors and shelves. The lye may be used for rinsing things over and over. A spoonful in dishwater, a cupful in water to scrub with, is very cleansing, only you must not let a drop fall on your clothes, for it will stain and burn, and you must use it with a swab, and not let it get on your

hands, or they will be ruined with cracks and sores. Always rinse your hands in vinegar and water after using it. If you are careful in its use lye is the greatest help in cleaning, and does away with all greasy, disagreeable and bad smelling work. A spoonful in a basin of warm water will clean old, grimy paint, and leave it looking bright as new. It must be rinsed off quickly and wiped dry, and it should not be used on varnished furniture or oiled wood.

You want to make that smoky teakettle bright and nice enough to complete your kitchen picture when it sings for tea, and you don't want to scrub an hour over it. Make a strong hot suds with lye in it, dip the kettle in and wash the smoke off with a swab or brush, rinse it, drain dry, and clean with whiting and kerosene, or fine sapolio, applied with one large flannel, and polish with dry whiting and a fresh cloth. It is easier than decalcomanie, and then you keep your kettle bright by rubbing it every day with coarse paper.

For all this cleaning of silver, brass and tin, you wear gloves to keep your hands from growing into paws, stiff, rough and unmanageable. If you

can't get old kid gloves enough, cotton flannel gloves or mittens are good, made up the soft side in, and the seams outside opened and felled down. They should have long wrists to button over the dress-sleeve, and ought to be washed every day after getting through work.

I hope you never wear anything but wash dresses about housework. It cannot be nice to wear cashmere, flannel, or cloth for work, even if they are old dresses, for woolens catch dust and lint, and hold grease and smells of cooking and of suds in a dreadful way, no matter how careful the wearer. A clean sixpenny print is far more ladylike for kitchen or sweeping work than a second-best flannel or serge, and it should be easy-fitting, large in the armholes, and without lining unless it is a double gown lined with print. An unlined print, without overskirt or trimming except a gathered flounce, is washed and ironed almost as easily as a bib apron, and can be made of six to eight yards of calico. Nor need it look like a housemaid's dress either. A fresh dark print, domestic gingham in small brown or blue check, an indigo or china blue percale with small

white dots, are any of them very pretty made as an English gown, gathered in a belt at the waist, the skirt rather scant, but fullness added by a small flounce at the feet, the sleeves gathered on the shoulder and tapered in leg-of-mutton fashion to the wrist, or gathered in a band like the old bishop sleeves which are worn again. The white collar and little brooch or bow of ribbon at the throat, the stout apron of crash, ready to take all traces of rough work, the smart slippers and red or blue stockings are picturesque enough to suit any girl who has taste as well as fancy.

## II.—THE NIGHT BEFOREHAND.

YOU would like to know how to get the upper-hand of your work, and keep it, instead of having it drive you all your life long?

Then let me tell you, Anna Maria, that you can't begin too early after you are thirteen, the *practise* of housekeeping. You may go to a cooking-class and learn to make charlotte russe, and arrowroot for invalids, and bone turkey for parties, and it is very useful to know just how an expert cook does these things; you may go to lectures which tell you all about the carbons and nitrogens of food, and how they combine; you may read and write down any number of recipes in nice little blank books, yet the first half-day's housekeeping will bring you face to face with more that you don't know than you ever dreamed of. You can as well expect to become a painter by



reading the hosts of books written on art, and studying galleries of pictures, without handling a brush, as to learn anything about housekeeping without going into the drudgery with your own hands.

What is more, you must resolve to take the responsibility of the work, and learn what it is to be the working power of the whole household machine. You must learn how to be up to time with prompt meals, and laundry-work, to have supplies of clean clothes and towels always ready, to keep rooms tidy and fresh, and to renew things as they wear out, so that the word "homely" in your mind will never signify shabby or mean.

It is no small thing to stand at the head of affairs, and be the motive power on which depend the welfare and credit, the health, temper and spirit of the whole family. A late breakfast sends father and brothers to business with the whole day thrown out of shape; a poor meal leaves all the family to work or study without proper supplies to work upon, and they will feel weak, nervous and lacking in energy, perhaps in some vital crisis like that which found Napoleon at a memorable battle. The fortunes

of the field were wavering; a bold movement at the right hour would have saved the day, but a badly cooked dinner had given him a headache, his brain was clouded and confused, his heart palpitating, when he needed clear head and firm nerve — he gave the wrong order and the battle was lost. When in midlife you come to find how essential the comfort of a well-kept home is to the bodily strength and good conditions, to a sound mind and spirit, and useful days, you will reverence the good housekeeper as I do — above artist or poet, beauty or genius.

Between you and me, Anna Maria, it takes genius to be a first-rate housekeeper. A woman of third-rate will “let things go,” and think they will “do,” and make up all sorts of clever-sounding excuses for her shiftlessness, and even make a virtue of neglect, pretending she lets them slip for matters of higher importance. But the woman of keen mind and senses finds the dust in corners, and the smells from the sink and pantry, and the careless laundry and chamberwork intolerable and not to be borne, and amends all that other people have “put up with,” to the injury of their health and brains, for generations.

You may not be a genius of the first rank, Anna Maria, but you may have what goes with genius — a spirit of the first and finest order, which tolerates no secondary, slipshod work of any sort.

While your mother is gone to Tiverton will be a good time to begin your responsible housekeeping you think?

Before your mother goes will be better, for you will find the experience of an old housekeeper at hand the next thing to having a fairy godmother popping up out of the meal-chest or the chimney corner at the right minute. You will want all that your mother and aunt Jane and old 'Cretia, the colored washerwoman, and the receipt books can tell you. I never let any mortal, old or young, great or undersized, go out of my house without their telling me at least one thing I didn't know before, and you will find literally no end to the notions and helps you can pick up day by day.

To-morrow you begin then to do your best, and to better it. My dear child, to-morrow always begins the night before, and you can't get the good of your day without planning for it. To get breakfast quickly,

you want ever so much done the night before. *Not* as the over-smart, half-taught women say in those wonderful home departments of the country papers, which show how little our women know about housekeeping, by grinding coffee and filling the teakettle the night before. The coffee loses flavor, and water that has been standing all night absorbs bad air and is unfit to use. Besides it is so flat that it can never make good tea or coffee. But you can have the dining-room swept and in order, the table set if necessary, and covered with a large white mosquito netting kept for the purpose. You are to bake bread to-morrow, and no good housekeeper wants bread "riz by daylight," as that funny Mrs. Sanford says in the Round Robin novel. You want your fire to keep over night, in cool weather, and let me tell you that learning to manage a coal fire has tested the wits and endurance of cleverer women than you or I ever shall be. Shake down the ashes, and put on fresh coal with a layer of cinders on the top, then close all the drafts except the smoke draft. Why? Because else the gas from the fresh coal will fill the room with a dangerous, sometimes fatal air, and that from the

cinders is worse. You see that little blue flame playing on the top of the cinders? That denotes the presence of carbonic-oxide gas, which is to the dreaded carbonic-acid gas that kills people in mines and in old wells, what prussic acid is to arsenic, swifter and deadlier. The one thousandth part of this gas mingled with common air has proved fatal, and the worst is that it has no smell that people commonly notice. Not long ago a whole school in Connecticut was found insensible from the fumes of this gas escaping from the box-stove which had been crammed with fresh coal and the drafts all closed. A workman's family were found dead from the same cause last year, having filled their cylinder stove with coal for the night and shut it up to keep. Always leave the smoke-draft open in stove, range or furnace. When there is a wind or it is very cold weather, and the draft is stronger than usual, drawing through every chink and seam of the iron, close the damper half way, and leave one of the stove-covers half off, sticking the poker into the fire to keep the lid in place.

In the morning, if you want early breakfast, never

wait for coal to burn up, but half fill your teakettle, pumping off the water that has stood in the pipe all night till it runs cold and fresh—put four or five large sticks of kindling, three inches thick, to be particular, on the coals, open the drafts and whip on kettle and frying-pan to catch every instant's heat. You can in a good stove, cook beefsteak and potatoes, griddle cake and wheaten grits, or bake biscuit with this fire, by the time it burns down ready to put coal on. It ought not to take you more than fifteen minutes to get such a breakfast from the time the first blaze starts. It takes Irish Ann an hour and a half with her potherings and pokings, but with your intelligence and quick nerves you can do better. You may not do it the first time of trying, nor in a week, but in a fortnight, or month at the outside, you should have difficulties in your grasp and your hands so trained that things go of themselves.

To-night you may set griddle cakes, stirring corn meal, flour, or graham meal as you prefer into sour milk, or mixing with milk and water and cream of tartar or a spoonful of molasses, leaving the jar in a warm place to sour and rise. Why do you mix these

over-night? So that the meal or flour can more thoroughly absorb the water or milk and swell each particle and develop its flavor as it cannot in hasty mixing just before it is cooked. You will find the difference in the goodness of your cakes next morning. Sift your flour three times to make it light, after its compression within the barrel in which it was packed. Graham or corn meal will answer with once sifting. You want to sift graham, no matter how nice it looks, down to the bran, and take out any black specks; then put all the bran into the flour again. It needs to be sifted in this careful way because the graham, or wheat meal, which is the better name, easily heats or ferments in keeping, and may breed worms in spite of the careful grocer or housekeeper. Each quart of milk or water for making griddle cakes will take a heaping pint of flour or meal to make batter just right; if thick at night it will be thin enough when mixed in the morning. Keep this rule in your head, for it will insure griddle cakes that are good if other points are attended to. Set the batter in an earthen jar or pitcher twice as large as the amount it is to hold, for the mixture will swell

and rise, and you want to be able to stir it without spattering or overflowing the vessel. You will prevent those dismal catastrophes of spoiled dresses, and floors and tables overrun with your cooking, by remembering always to use a large pan or jar for mixing.

To wash the potatoes, which you fancy must be disagreeable, let them soak in plenty of water five minutes while you mix the cakes, then scrub them with a stiff whisk broom or brush, stirring them well in the pail, which is the best thing to hold them. Drain and rinse, then with a sharp penknife cut off the seed ends in a thin slice at each end, and cut out all rough or discolored spots which make the potato unsafe to eat. People should be much more particular about the quality of potatoes than they are, for a good sound potato is excellent eating, but poor potatoes are slow poison. Physicians have no doubt that cancer, and violent irritations of the blood, are caused by eating poor potatoes, infected with disease or poisoned by bugs and worms. No green-tinted or "false-hearted" potato is fit for food, and if it goes into the pot, it will spoil others boiled with it. You



need not pare potatoes before boiling; remove all spots and leave them over night in plenty of water to freshen. If they stain your fingers, rub them with pumice stone or on the kitchen grindstone, which will leave them like satin for smoothness and neatness.

Set your bread, which I won't tell you about just now, and *cover* your mixtures with a cloth, and saucer or board over that. Have a broad soapstone or four bricks warm on the back of the stove to place the bread and batter on, for one great point in having either of these good is to keep them evenly warm all the time without burning, which the bricks will insure, as they hold heat. Bread should be covered with a fresh cloth and a piece of blanket over that with a board to keep all in place.

What next? If you have a cat and dog, you are bound to see that they are comfortable; the dog in a good dry kennel with board floor lined with pine shavings which keep away the fleas that torment him. Remember to offer both dog and cat water the last thing at night, for want of which they often suffer before morning. You will be shocked to know how much our dumb faithful friends and pets suffer

at our hands from thoughtlessness. They cannot complain, till extremity drives them to a whine or howl, and the only way to prevent this undeserved torture is to provide for their wants beforehand, regularly. Put yourself in their place, and do as you would have them do by you, were they masters for once. Give the cat her basket or cushion, unless she prefers gallivanting by moonlight.

You never want to shut up a room with a sink in it, unless in the coldest nights, for more or less bad air constantly comes up the waste pipes from the sewer or from the mucus which lines pipes in use, and which will certainly affect all food in the room or closets adjoining. Meat, milk and butter are especially sensible of taint from the malaria, and diphtheria often is traced to this cause in very good houses. You want to leave one or more windows down at the top for four inches, securing them from being opened by burglars by a stout nail in a hole bored through sash and frame, like an old-fashioned spring-bolt. Or a stout stick placed upright between the upper bar of the top sash and the top of the lower one, will keep it safe.

The last part of a housekeeper's duty is to go over the house and see that outside doors and windows are secure, and this is no light responsibility.

I know it was the great care of my life when I first had a house of my own, for I could not sleep till I had seen that every window was latched, and a nail above the sash, and the doors bolted and locked from cellar to attic. You must see to this yourself, or you will find as I did, on leaving it to servants or brothers, that the family went the risk of sleeping with the hall door open all night, somebody carelessly shooting the bolt without trying it to see if the latch was caught; or the back windows and pantry were left open and unguarded, a silent invitation for any prowler to step in. You remember that fearful Hull murder in New York, when the negro Cox confessed that the sight of the open parlor windows, so easy of access, tempted him to pilfer, and then to suffocate his victim to prevent detection? It is a world of trouble to wander over a house, trying each of fifty windows perhaps, looking in the coal-hole and the closet under the stairs, and I have been laughed at for my care more times than was pleasant. You may look a score of

years without finding anything amiss, but it is good comfort hearing any unusual noise in the night to be sure it is no prowler inside the house. Or if you ever found a ruffian's face looking through the slats of the window blind at eleven o'clock at night, as you sat writing in a lonely country house with only frightened women in it beside yourself, there will be unspeakable courage in the first thought that every bar was fast between him and the house. That little experience I went through one night in a cottage on the Nantasket road, and behind bolted doors and windows was able to hold parley with the intruder till neighbors heard our alarm, and drove him off. The same night two other houses on the way were entered through unguarded upper windows, and robbed of considerable amounts, doubtless by the same fellow. It was worth the five years' trouble before, the getting out of bed midnights and wandering over the house to be *sure* no bolt was neglected, or the cellar door forgotten, to have the habit and the assurance that all was safe that one particular moment.

Fasten doors with bolt and lock, leaving the key in the lock, and securing it against being turned from

without by a stout wire bent over the shank of the door knob, both ends put through the hoop of the key, and turned up outside of it. Hang a chair on the knob if you like. Windows should have sash catches, but a nail driven above the lower sash is a very good safeguard, and blinds should be always closed at night with stout "snaps," which no wind can blow open.

Have pails of water drawn, in case of fire or sickness, and leave the kettle filled on the stove, to be ready with hot water for sudden cramp or congestion. It may save a life sometime to have hot water promptly, when ten minutes would be too late. Remember, in housekeeping as in everything else, nothing is so sure to happen as the unforeseen.

### III. — A GOOD BREAKFAST.

THE secret of a good day is a good morning, and a good morning always begins the night before. So many things toward a good start the coming day can be done the hour before you retire. The coffee is not to be ground or the teakettle filled to spoil over night, as I told you, but the dining-room can be swept, the table set with silver and china, the clean mosquito netting thrown over it, to keep off dust, and the fire laid for kindling if necessary. Night too is the time for little personal cares which thriftless people hurry through on rising, with breakfast duties waiting, and are apt to slight accordingly. Then is the time to wash neck, ears, arms and armpits daily with soap and hot water, for one perspires more when active, and no care is too

nice to prevent odors from clinging about dress and person, which are the vulgar but unnecessary consequence of housework. At night brush the hair thoroughly, and wash it once a week; rub your slippers with glycerine polish, baste the fresh ruffle in your gown, trim your fingernails and sew on the loose button. It will be a relief to find your dress and belongings ready to slip into next morning. If you do not bathe daily, and are in more or less dust, thorough neatness demands washing the feet nightly as much as washing the neck, and a fresh pair of stockings every day will be necessary for our nice housekeeper, even if she washes them herself. There is the comfort of doing one's own work, that no Bridget can grumble over the quantity of clean towels and toilet-covers, hose and pillow-cases found desirable.

Now for this hurry of early breakfast, which is the bugbear of the day; you must strive and practise till it is a machine matter down to the smallest point. Set the water from the faucet running the first thing, draw on sweeping-cap and gloves for stove-work, and let me whisper one secret again; rub glycerine or

sweet oil on your cheeks to prevent burning them over the fire. Fill the teakettle, and have your frying-pan and griddles on before lighting the fire, as I told you, that they may catch every bit of heat, open the dampers five minutes till the stove roars, then close the oven damper to throw the heat to the top of the stove, where it is needed instead of up chimney. If you want an early breakfast, you must have potatoes and cracked wheat or oatmeal boiled the day before; then coffee can be made, beefsteak cooked, potatoes stewed or fried in American style, the mush steamed or fried brown, and griddle cakes begun or eggs boiled, in fifteen minutes from the time you come down. Time yourself by the clock, day after day, until you can do this. You, Anna Maria, are supposed to bring quicker brains and more natural skill to your work than Bridget, and her slovenly, dragging ways are as disgraceful to you as her bad grammar, or tawdry Sunday bonnet would be.

No attitudinizing, no fine lady affectations over the griddles and saucepans; instead, cultivate the fine character which acts up to the need of the hour



swiftly, promptly, but with the quiet and certainty which keeps briskness from turning into vulgar hurry. Your object is to send the family off to school and business with a good start and good breakfast, which gives them cheer and strength to face the day, a capital better than money for people who have real work to do in the world. I have heard a girl of sixteen say: "Father isn't particular, and I get what's easiest for breakfast, bread and butter and tea, and a slice of ham, a little cold meat for lunch, and whatever happens for dinner, and he never says a word;" and I have seen the father looking worn and uncomplaining, going from his comfortable breakfast, and ill-kept house, to his day's work, or the young clerk, her brother, going to the office to work indoors all day, shut from the fresh air and sunshine which feed one, growing paler and thinner month after month, without the support of good, warm relishing food, which the girl was too careless to prepare, or to see that the servant prepares.

I want to speak seriously about this matter of providing *good* food, as it is something on which our

brains, morals and tempers depend, as well as our bodily strength. Good food is not rich food, still less is it the "tolerable" fare which is just undercooked and flavorless enough to tax digestion more than it ought.

The really good food helps one to do the most work with least fatigue; to study with the brightest thought. It is the best of everything cooked in the nicest possible way, and with pleasant variety. It may be simple fare, but the potatoes will be the whitest and driest "selected," as marketmen say; the steak, whether sirloin or "chuck," will be freshly cut, bright and clean; the butter faultless even if you go without it at dinner as the French do, for the sake of having the best, and the coffee, flour and meal in your storeroom will be the best of their kind. Then it will be as delicately cooked and neatly served as at the most expensive restaurant, if not better; for your ambition will be to have as many niceties as possible at home which are not known abroad.

It has been quite the fashion to say that the French habit of taking a roll and cup of coffee on

rising, with a substantial breakfast at noon, was the only correct way, but those who thought so discover that different climates and habits require difference of food. So the bright girl who pines to change the order of her mother's house, and plans for breakfast of *café-au-lait* and rolls, like that at French pensions, or of toast and marmalade, because that is the correct thing in English novels, is reminded that the people who find such fare sufficient, dined about seven in the evening, and had some rusk and wine, or bread and cheese, or ices before they went to bed at midnight or later. Busy Americans who took supper at five, or dinner at six, and went to bed at ten, require the comfortable breakfast common at our tables. Honor your own customs as natural and fit for the country and society when found; for highbred foreigners easily learn to prefer the cheery American breakfast with all the steak, broiled chicken, muffins, maple syrup, apple butter, and the rest of the nice country variety. We will take the standard breakfast, Anna Maria, and see how it can be improved.

Except in very cold weather, fruit is always acceptable, and should be your table decoration instead of

flowers, which refined taste begins to find out of place among meats and vegetables. "Arranging the flowers for the table" is one of the genteel young lady's duties which we can gratefully dispense with. Have them in the room, but on mantel or brackets, where their odor will not mingle with that of coffee and broiled meats. Nice mellow apples, grapes and oranges are in season most of the year, and, dressed with leaves, are the most tempting centre piece for the table. The fruit can be arranged the night before and left in a cool place, the same leaves placed in water after each meal, lasting a week. The next dish is usually wheat, hominy or oatmeal, with sugar and milk. Wheat is better for general use, as it has more phosphate for the brain and bones, and is less oily than oatmeal, and better for the complexion. The very best way to eat either is with meats and gravies as a vegetable; but the food which made Cæsar's legions strong, deserves to be well cooked. The "steam-cooked" and "prepared" wheat is by no means as good as the plainer sort which any good miller can furnish, so it has been carefully washed and dried before grinding, the thinnest outer scale

taken off and the grain cracked or cut to be as little floury as possible. The "crushed white wheat" is a good staple article. Cook it the afternoon before, in the farina boiler, or in a tin pail set on a trivet in a kettle half full of boiling water. To a quart of fresh boiling water in the pail add eight large tablespoonfuls of wheat, dropping it in gently, and letting it mingle without stirring, and a teaspoonful of salt. This will be very thin and watery at first, but will swell in cooking. Cover, and set a few moments over the hot fire till the water in both kettles boils hard, then set back where it will simmer half an hour, the last ten minutes with the cover off the pail to let the water evaporate. The grains should be swelled and distinct as rice. Watch to see that it does not burn, and do not stir it, as that makes it pasty. If you like, add half a cup of raisins or currants which have been soaking half an hour in a warm place, when the wheat begins to boil. This is nice with the sugar and milk. When done, pour into a dish; if nicely cooked, the wheat comes out in a mass, leaving the kettle quite clean. Next morning all you have to do is to set the dish into a steamer over

boiling water and heat through to make it ready for table, unless you like it fried in thick slices on a large, very hot griddle, with just enough butter or nice fat to keep it from sticking; or shaped between the bowls of two large spoons into balls, dipped in beaten egg and fried brown and dry in a kettle of fat for queen fritters; or stirred with three eggs, minced beef, pepper, and a half cup of gravy, and baked in a pudding-pan, for a side dish.

Now for your cold boiled potatoes, which you may serve stewed or fried in butter or nice fat on the big griddle, so that each piece will brown well, instead of jumbling them into the frying-pan to be half scorched and half sodden in the common sorry fashion. For frying this way, you may use rather dull-looking potatoes, which will fry dry and light, but it takes white mealy ones to make a nice dish stewed. Don't try Saratoga potatoes till you can cook plain fried ones well that have been boiled beforehand, taking them up with the griddle-cake turner to keep each piece whole, browning each like a pancake, peppering and salting over the fire, so that the flavor will cook into them, and arranging neatly on a hot platter in over-

lapping rows, when you will find potatoes *a l'Americaine* quite as satisfactory as any of the French ways.

But I will not give recipes, save a hint or two on points where many questions have been asked, as about the cooking of wheaten grits. These chapters are not about cookery, but housekeeping, and it will be more help to give a list of simple things for breakfast which you can learn to cook from the many pleasant books on the subject. For every second-rate housekeeper I ever knew, was wont to declare that the hardest thing in her life was to tell what to get for three meals a day. Now let us lay this bugbear once and forever, Anna Maria, by finding out what there is to have if we can get it, what we can have, and what we will choose to have for two weeks ahead. I will give you a list made by a real housekeeper for her own use, and you can strike out all that you cannot get; write down your list of supplies, and make up your memorandum of what you will have for breakfast each day for the week or fortnight to come. It will be an evening's fun making out your list with the help of the family whose tastes are to be consulted in the matter. The dishes below are

especially served for breakfast in a good style of living.

#### WHAT SHALL WE HAVE FOR BREAKFAST?

Fresh fruits in season, raw tomatoes sliced, radishes, salads, cresses.

Farina, wheaten grits, oatmeal, pearl hominy, samp, and all these fried. Boiled rice and corn mush are only served at breakfast fried in slices.

Dry toast, cream, and egg toast, corn muffins, graham or wheat muffins (vulgarly called gems), queen fritters, corn bread, brown biscuits, flannel cakes, corn or wheatmeal griddle cakes, buckwheat in season, rice, hominy, and oatmeal cakes, and, best of all, Adirondack pancakes.

Baked potatoes, Saratoga, lyonnaise, stewed, fried, with gravy; baked sweet potatoes.

Sweet corn fritters in season, carrot-mince, oyster plant and parsnips, parsnip fritters, vegetable hash, fried squash, baked beans, fried apples.

Beefsteak, veal cutlets, mutton chops, venison steak in season, salmon steak.

Fresh fish, fried and broiled, fish-cakes, oyster frit-



ters, clam fritters, fish with cream, omelets, dropped eggs, hash, on toast and with eggs, broiled chicken, Maryland chicken, lamb tenderloins, kidneys with vegetables, calf's brains with tomato sauce, giblet toast, potted squirrel, Oxford sausage, turkey or chicken hash, potted meats; beef jelly for summer breakfasts.

Apple, peach or quince butter, wild raspberry jam, cider apple sauce, baked pears and apples, honey, maple syrup, white sugar syrup, melon syrup. Coffee, cocoa, chocolate with vanilla or cinnamon flavor, dandelion coffee, and root beer or lemonade tea, the three last in spring and summer.

Few of the above are expensive dishes even for plain families, and I advise you to make it a year's study to learn how to cook them. Any family of five spending from eight to ten dollars a week on marketing can afford such a bill of fare, if there is a careful little housekeeper and clever cook at the helm. You will hear this questioned, but I have the bills of a city family to show for it, and in many parts of the country things are much cheaper. You can't afford such fare with a common servant at any such

price, for it takes a clever person to spend money well. Perhaps you will like to spend an evening with me over a lady's accounts, and see what part they play in nice housekeeping.

#### IV. — A LADY'S ACCOUNT BOOKS.

DO you see that shabby little pocket memorandum book with blue cover and pencil tuck, on the hanging shelf with the smart octavos in Russia leather? That is a little girl's first account book, given with her first whole dollar to spend, by her father, when she was seven years old. You will find every penny of it set down scrupulously in the shaky handwriting: ten cents for writing paper, five cents worth of liquorice, three cents postage — it was just after the ten-cent postage for every letter was abolished — eight cents worth of zephyr wool, one cent for lozenges, five cents to a younger sister — ah, how many things that dollar bought! It lasted the greater part of a year for spending money I believe, till she was promoted to an allowance of five cents a week spending money, which you will find faithfully set

down each Saturday, with one fearful lapse of months when it went to pay for a yard of ribbon, which she understood the clerk to say was four cents, but proved when cut and done up to be four shillings, or fifty cents. The clerk offered to take it back, seeing the little girl's mistake, but an order was an order with her childish sense of honor, and she paid for it with her mother's money, and stopped her allowance till the sum was made up. How hard it was to do without any money so long, and how ugly that ribbon looked always! I want to say that it would have been strictly right and ladylike to have let the clerk take it back, as the mistake was honestly made, and as long as we are not infallible, we should not be too proud to accept consideration for our blunders.

But it was long ago, and the slim young lady account book next it in blue morocco, has two or three stories of foolish expense nearly as sad to tell. But they went down in black and white, and did this good: that one day the owner sat down and counted up all the useless sums spent in a year, and at the head of the next page you see written the solemn injunction: "No more confectionery, no newspapers, no nuts, no

photographs ;” for in these trifles enough had been frittered away to buy the silk dress which was desirable for evening wear, and which could not possibly be afforded when it was most needed. The poor little student had felt that five dollars a year was more than she could afford to pay as subscription to a good library, yet in two years she had spent for occasional magazines and weeklies over twelve dollars, when the library would have given her the reading of all the home and foreign magazines, and a hundred newspapers, with all the books she wanted beside.

It was a faithful lesson which the blue account book read to her, and when she went to housekeeping on a limited income, the first thing bought was a family account book, which did more, she says, to keep down expense than anything in the world. One can't go on spending needlessly with the record and balance of loss staring her in the face every day and week. Her New Year gift sometime ago was a set of housekeeping books, in small octavo, bound in dark-red leather to match, and a pretty show they make — Inventory, Personal Expense, Day book and Ledger — they are the handsomest volumes in the

bookcase, and placed among poets and birthday books.

Anna Maria, there are sheets of account paper sold at ten cents a quire, and the first thing this evening you want to make out a list of all the house-keeping articles in the house, and the condition they are in. Women usually keep the run of such things in their minds; but it is more businesslike, and makes matters clearer to know what you have in writing. Then you know whether the wind has blown away dinner napkins and pillow cases, or whether the washerwoman scorched a pair and tucked them in the coal hole, and whether the new sheets wore as long as they should, or whether there is soda in the new washing-mixture eating them thin every week, and a dozen other things a housekeeper must be aware of. You must go with pencil and paper through the house, making a rough list — “taking account of stock” — which you will find much to your profit. Have one page for table linen, a second for bed linen, which is the name for it, though it's all cotton; another for the clothing, a page for each one of the family; the furniture, bedding, crockery and china, kitchen ware, stores — that is, flour, meats,

preserves, wood, coal, and things bought by quantity. You see how it is set down in this book.

Table linen,

*July 13th, 1881.*

- 1 doz. breakfast napkins, nearly new,
- 1-2 " " " half worn,
- 1 doz. dinner napkins, fern pattern, new,
- 1 " " " snowdrop " ten mo's wear,
- 1 " cake " fringed, " " "
- 3 half bleached tablecloths, " " "
- 3 white check, " " " "
- 2 dark-red lunch cloths, six mo's "
- 1 blue and silver-gray " new,
- 1 wild rose cloth, 3 yds. long, good,
- 1 scroll pattern " " " worn,

*April 20th, 1882.*

- 1 double damask dinner cloth, lily pattern,
- 2 half bleached breakfast cloths, snowdrop pattern,
- 1 3-4 doz. napkins, oak-leaf pattern.

*June 18th.*

Made four tray-cloths from scroll pattern tablecloth. Also two window-seat cushions from old turkey-red cloth.

Here is the china closet inventory :

- 8 plain china coffee cups & saucers,
- 12 " " tea " 10 "
- 13 " " breakfast plates, perfect,
- 7 " " " " cracked,

9 cut glass water goblets,  
 14 common      "      "  
 1      "      glass pitcher,  
 24 jelly glasses, and so on.

Silverware.

1 plated dinner castor,  
 1      "      breakfast      "  
 1 doz. silver teaspoons,  
 1 doz. ice cream      "  
 6 silver tablespoons  
 4      "      "      "      gold lined,  
 1      "      fish-slice,  
 1 cake basket, plated, etc.

You see this inventory only has to be made out two or three times in a life, and you may give your spare hours for a week to making it. After this, you must put down everything bought, or made up, or lost, and go over the count as often as necessary. The housekeeper in a large English family keeps such an inventory, and compares it once a week with the articles in use to see that none are lost or stolen. If you do your own work, once a month will be often enough to count up the spoons and toilet covers, the socks and handkerchiefs, and all the rest.



Next you want a few folio sheets of bill paper in a stiff pasteboard cover, easy to write on, with a pencil tied to a string ; this cheap day book to hang in the kitchen beside the calendar and clock. Here every item is entered which you buy, whether on credit or paid for at once. Also have a letter hook, clip, or some contrivance for holding bills which the butcher, baker and candlestick maker will send in once a week or once a month, if you buy on credit ; and remember ! always ask for a bill when you buy things, unless the purchase is very trifling and paid for immediately, and *always* make the dealer receipt that bill when you pay it, signing his name and “received payment,” plainly ; lastly, *keep* all your bills whether paid or not, to the end of the year, when small receipts may be burned. *Always* keep receipts for rent, board, taxes, for borrowed money, if you ever have to borrow, and it is not a bad plan to file all your bills of every sort ; that is, put them away in regular order. People who change from place to place often, will find it wise never to destroy a receipted bill. Mistakes will happen with honest folks ; petty dishonesty is not so uncommon as it ought to be—

a dealer's clerk may forget to enter your bill as paid on his book, or he may think it smart to try to collect the money twice, or there may be persons of the same name as yours who have not paid their bills; but if you have the dealer's bill in his own or his clerk's writing, with that little "*Rec'd pay't, John Smith,*" or whatever his name is, that settles the matter: you cannot be called on to pay it over. You will find the habit of keeping receipts save you a world of cheating when you take that tour in Europe which every girl looks forward to as a possibility in her life, for continental shopkeepers have a trick of getting the same bill paid two or three times, unless one is shrewd enough to have the receipt to show.

With the inventory, your hasty day book and a better book in which you enter the sum of each week's expense with different dealers, or under the heads of fuel, meats, vegetables, furnishings, groceries, etc., your housekeeping accounts can be kept in good shape. It is no small credit to a girl to have a set of neatly kept books, by turning to which she can see at a moment, what each week's expense has been, how much has been made or saved in housekeeping, and what indul-

gence in spending she will be able to allow.

The next thing you need to learn, Anna Maria, is, just what ought to be allowed for everything. How much coal or wood is enough for each fire one day, week and month ; how much flour, sugar, meat and vegetables you need for each person in the family ; how much coffee goes to make a cup or a quart, strong or common ; how much gas or kerosene should be burned ; how long supplies ought to last — this knowledge is one of the most important parts of house-keeping, and one which people know the least about.

But if you don't know how much it takes to feed and warm the family with comfort, how can you order supplies so as to have plenty on hand, and yet not waste as much as you use ? If ten dollars a week is all your father can afford to pay for groceries and fuel, how can you be sure you are not spending more than you can pay, or that you get all the pleasant living you might out of that sum ? This kind of wisdom makes a woman a good manager, and she will keep a family well dressed with a good table and a trifle to spare for the same money on which a family of poor contrivance is always pinching and running behind.

I don't want you to learn to save for stinginess' sake, but that you may have all the good and pretty things money and labor can bring you. I well remember the sense of control over affairs it gave me to find that it was possible to calculate the quantities and cost of housekeeping as exactly as the yards of lining and trimming to make a dress. Now here are some things you want to make note of :

One third of a ton of coal should keep fire all day in a stove or open grate one month ; and you must allow that amount for the cooking range ten months in the year. In summer many families contrive to do most of their baking and roasting the same day the ironing is done, and only light the range that day, cooking by a kerosene stove the rest of the time.

Good management will have enough left from the three tons for the range to last for this summer fire. A No. 8. furnace should burn night and day on half a ton a month, and a large one takes not over one ton a month when well managed. A large base burning stove run night and day to full heating power needs not over half a ton. One half cord of pine, and the same of dry oak, should be kindling enough for

range, furnace and two extra fires one year. Now, find how many fires you need to keep in the house, and the price of fuel, and calculate how much you must order in a year, and what it will cost. Find out how much actually is used in the house in one year, and see whether it is less or more than the estimate. Your father can tell you what the coal and kindling bills amount to in a twelve month, and if it is more than half a ton a month for each full fire, there is waste going on which ought to be stopped, and it will be your work to save that waste. If you can have just as good fires and just as warm rooms by burning ten dollars less in coal in a year, that ten dollars can go toward new books, pictures, or new china and furnishings. I advise every boy and girl twelve years old and over, to learn how to build and keep fires in furnace, range, grates or stoves with the least waste of fuel, for it is knowledge certain to be useful. A man once told me his kitchen range used two tons of coal a month, although it was the same size as my own which only used half a ton to do the same work. There were twenty-four tons of coal wasted in doing the work of six; and as coal was

then six dollars a ton, there was over a hundred dollars thrown away just as if he had tossed the bank notes into the fire. I think you will agree there is more fun to be had out of money than to send it up chimney in this way.

Now as to food. How much of each kind is enough for each person daily or weekly? You must learn something about this, or you will be alternately providing too much and having it spoil on your hands, and then scrimping to make up for it. Never waste, never stint, is the good housekeeper's rule, and the most wasteful extravagant people are sure to be the meanest in many matters.

An experienced woman will tell you that in a family it is safe to allow, for each person consumes in a week, one quarter to one half pound of butter, one-half pound of coffee, two pounds of sugar, four pounds of meat, and three loaves of bread in some shape, beside one third of a pound of wheat or oatmeal, fruit and vegetables not being counted.

Now as you wish to live expensively, or moderately, or economically, as suits your income, you can decide whether to allow Philadelphia butter at seventy-five

cents a pound, Mocha at forty-five, prime cuts of beef at forty and sixty cents a pound, as they cost in cities, or the best country butter at thirty-five cents, sirloin and chops at twenty-five cents a pound, and Java at thirty-five, which are common prices. Or if, as you do, Anna Maria, you wish to spare as much money for pretty things and good times in other ways, you must learn thrifty ways of buying supplies of just as good quality at the seasons when they are cheapest, and in quantities when they are always lowest in price. You can have a better table, with more variety than most families, at a great deal lower cost, for nothing is less understood among Americans than how to make the most of food. I see plain families sitting down to salt fish and potatoes for dinner three or four times a week because meat is high, and they do not know how to serve a daintily browned steak from a cheap cut, or braise a bit of soup beef till it looks and eats as well as sirloin roast, or to make a rich and savory stew out of "trimmings" of meats. They never can afford venison or game, though by watching the market they would sometimes find these as cheap as any meat, and they don't use maple syrup, or comb honey, •

or peach butter, or quince marmalade, and a dozen other nice things they might have if they knew how to buy supplies cheaply, as they should. For you must give your folks ample variety, Anna Maria; not so much at one meal, but exchange from day to day if you want them well and strong and good humored. The human system needs variety, and you will find as a rule that the food which relishes best, nourishes best. What does a doctor order to make an invalid gain strength, but game, chicken, broths, ice creams, jellies, white grapes, and things which taste good because they *are* good. And to keep your people sound, merry and well, you want to give them just as good food as you can afford, plenty of it, and in variety. As I have told you, good food is not always what we call rich food, which generally means over-rich in butter or fat, eggs, wine, or spice. Yet it should be rich in some of these things to a degree, rich in nourishment for nerves and brain, phosphate for bones and teeth, fat to keep us warm and round the limbs, and gelatine to lessen the waste of the body in work. Poor cooking robs food of these qualities more or less. Poor food has lost them, to begin with. Nice



baked pears have fat and heat-making carbon in their rich syrup as truly as a slice of bacon or beef; but if the pears are woody and tasteless to begin with, or are baked watery or dried, the nourishment is out of them, and you might as well eat sawdust and sweetened water. Bread has phosphates and strength-feeding elements, but if it is "slack-baked" or "sad," you turn it into such stuff that only the strongest stomach gains anything from it.

Let us look into this matter of nourishing foods farther.

## V.—A BILL OF WASTE.

MY dear, I'm glad you've run in this way while the folks are at lecture ; take the little Shaker chair and let us be cosey. You would like to go over housekeeping accounts this evening when we are sure not to be disturbed? The High School girls would poke fun at that as poor entertainment, I'm afraid, but you begin to find an interest in such things. The success, the history and the tragedy of some families lies between the covers of their account books. This ledger with the red and blue ruling is all we have left by the fairy godmother who used to have a trick of appearing on the hearth or by the wayside just in the right time to help distressed damsels, or succor the whole family. The old fairy never shows herself any more, but she is there in the wainscot, or with her ear at the chimney flue, and her hand turns the leaves of the family account book nights, and makes strokes of good or ill luck accord-

ing to what she finds there. As we keep its pages well or neglect it, we will feel the tap of her angry wand, or we will find her blessing left beside the hearthstone.

To show you in ugly, complete shape, what can slip away from one in the course of the year by easy, careless waste, let me give you some calculations I've amused myself with in a satiric way, when I wasn't able to hinder the waste going on around me. You know I have been out of health a good deal, and obliged to leave things in the hands of such help as we could find. If there has been a cross in my life it has been to be obliged to lie by and see substance and comfort thrown out of the windows by reckless stranger hands, without being able to prevent it. As the worry would not be kept out my head, I used to try to reduce it to exact shape, and pencil calculations about it, for it was a satisfaction to know the worst; just how much the stores laid in for the season would run short, just how many dollars of a moderate income were washed away in soap, starch, and firing, or flung away in spoiled food. The loss once known could be faced, regretted and dismissed.

It always was a relief to know that five dollars a week were wasted when I had feared twelve. Anything better than uncertainty.

You know Mrs. Mills, who was laid by so long with lameness, so long after her fall on the ice last year, and you know Mary McGowan, the country girl she had to work for her. The way that girl got on was remarkable. Coming here three years ago without a second dress to her name, and hardly able to read, by making the most of every chance, and never spending a penny for anything she could possibly have given her, she turns out on Sundays and afternoons as well-dressed, and, as her class say, well-appearing as any girl in town. She is intensely ambitious to get ahead in the world and improve herself. She told Mrs. Mills one day that she hated work, and wanted to educate herself to be a lady physician or teacher; "something better than a hired girl in a kitchen," as she said, with an accent of bitter scorn. It was very well for her to wish to learn, and Mrs. Mills was glad to lend her books and see her find time to study, and talk with her about things she wanted explained. With three afternoons

a week and every evening to herself, there was time enough to study if she wished; more than many a young man has had to fit himself for college. The ladies of the Mission Society used to "take an interest in her," as they called it, and write her notes of advice and sympathy, send for her to visit them, urge her to write essays for the Sunday-school class, and advise her to read, write and study every chance. I used to wonder sometimes why it never entered the heads of these good women to exhort her to do her duty in the calling where she was, and the only one she was fitted for as yet, or why no one ever asked her gently if she was dealing fairly with the employer whose bread she ate and whose money she took. The ill-kept house, dirty and shabby about the front hall, the neglected grates and windows, the finger-marked doors, the disorderly rooms, all went down to Mrs. Mills' discredit, not that of the stout young woman engaged at her own terms to take care of the house. Mrs. Mills was ordered to keep still and get better, so she could only shut her eyes and bear the waste and disorder as best she might. You will know about it some day when you have a

house of your own, if you ever have to depend on hired help. But I was going to tell you of the day when she first felt able to go into the kitchen and take things in hand. I found her sitting before the table, sorting and cleaning things from the pantry. May you never open the door on such a provision closet as that was! the shelves left so white and clean, covered with paper which was a sample bill of fare for weeks—smeared with syrups, cold gravy, dripping, sifted with pearl hominy, sago, coffee grounds, meat scraps partly spoiled and giving such an odor as would soon spoil everything left in the closet. In one corner was the new tin dish pan full of old bread scraps, and under it the stone bread jar big enough to hold a child, and full of scraps, the cake box the same. They were put on the table, and I sat down to help sort the clean cut slices of bread and wedges of cake from those only fit for the chickens. The lower layers were mouldy, showing they had lain for weeks, and in the jar was a grown dead mouse, smothered by an avalanche of bread. There was a half-bushel of spoiled bread, including the mouse's vault, and we had the curiosity to weigh it. Twenty

pounds wasted of home made bread worth six cents a pound. I looked further. There was a joint of roast beef with blue mould on it and an odor quite conclusive of decay, that weighed three pounds and a half, worth seventeen cents a pound. Two pounds of fish gone stale in a covered dish, twenty cents. Three quarts of soup stock sour in the kettle by keeping in a warm place. Cake dry, and too dusty for use in puddings, at least a dollar's worth; as much more burned; the pickled cabbage spoiled by neglect, half a dollar; two pounds of suet, mouldy, sixteen cents. Dripping spoiled at least three pounds, eighteen cents. And the grocery bills at least five dollars a week higher with the girl than before she came. Will you count it up?

Bread, 20 pounds, at 6 cents	\$1.20
Beef, 3 1-2 " " 17 "	.59
Fish,	.20
Soup, 3 quarts, at 9 cents	.27
Cake,	1.00
Cabbage,	.50
Dripping and suet,	.34
	<hr/>
	\$4.10
Waste in cooking,	10.00
	<hr/>
	\$14.10

Seven dollars a week waste that could be counted; the list just reckoned being the loss for a fortnight. Add to this the socks, towels and handkerchiefs which blew off the bushes or were snowed under, the pillow cases and fine things mildewed, the china broken, napkins stained or scorched, and you will agree that Mary McGowan was a fortune to anybody by getting rid of her. I can't say she was any worse than a dozen other girls I've known — alas ! — but the wonder in her case was, that neither she with all her ambitions and good feelings, nor the cultivated Christian women who cared for her, ever thought there was want of principle in her wasting another's substance so recklessly, and that other anything but a rich woman. Common honesty would keep her from filching seven dollars a week from Mrs. Mills' purse, but neither high sentiments or Christian teaching prevented her from wasting that and more for her employer, out of dislike and impatience of her employment. I had rather some one had stolen the money if it were my case, for then it would have been of use. As it was, over twenty-five dollars a month was thrown in the garbage. Perhaps you think this an imaginary



case, but it is such a bill as a sick and sorry woman sat down to last winter, over the wanton waste of a "faithless help."

A gentleman once made an estimate of the daily loss in London, if each grown person wasted two ounces of bread, and that is so small a crust that you would never think about it. The amount came to many thousands of pounds; worth nearly \$5000. Think what good this money would do the charities and hospitals of the city; and remember that if so much bread is wasted one day, so much money *must* be paid out to replace it the next.

Pray don't think I mean you should follow the old frugal habit of "eating a thing to save it," if there is more food on your plate than you care for. The very poorest economy I know of, is forcing more on your digestion than it needs, and spoiling your stomach to save a pennyworth of something. But there is no need of wasting the pennyworth either. Better learn tasteful ways of helping to food without loading plates, or serving more than a person is likely to want, and thus saving it in its best shape; for it is worth much more neat and untouched to serve

on the table again than to give cows or chickens.

Two young housekeepers who were school friends when girls were comparing expenses. The families were the same and the style of living; yet one spent \$15 a month less than the other.

"But how do you make it out, Sadie?" implored her friend, almost with tears in her eyes. "I am sure I economize every way I can think of, yet you have a nicer house and table than we do on less money."

"There's only one way to account for it, Helen," said the graver of the two, a girl who had been trained to care-taking by a good mother. "I do my own work as you do, and looking back on our expenses for a year, I don't think one cent's worth of our supplies has been wasted, or that it failed of being turned to the best account. I *know* there has not been a stick of kindling, or a scuttle of coal burnt, or a pound of flour, or a bit of soap, that wasn't put to its best use, nor a shilling's worth of anything scorched, torn, or lost in the washing, and it all counts by the end of the year.

"But you must be all the time thinking of little petty savings, that must narrow the mind in time, and

I never could bring myself to that in the world. I hope I never should."

"Helen, you know my grandmother was one of the neatest, most economical souls ever made. She used to say that she could do a day's baking of bread, pies, and cake, and when all was made, the waste flour and scrapings would all go into the bowl of a spoon. It was true, for I've seen her mix and mould in the nicest way without, it seemed, strewing a grain of flour, or dusting the table. She taught her family this habit of nice dealing; and mother taught us, till it comes like second nature to be careful. You don't think every moment about being attentive to a visitor who calls, for it's easy and natural to entertain. You play an air on the piano without thinking, because you have practised it, or you are nice about your dress because you can't help it. But I have heard coarse, unrefined people say they never could abide to be always thinking of their manners or their clothes, for they were sure they never could attend to anything else if they did. Folks can narrow their minds by always thinking of one thing, whether it is dress, or music, or how to save a few cents; but that is no rea-

son why we should be afraid to be well dressed, or fine musicians, or good economists."

It is a great mistake to think that care or saving narrow the mind. Rather, they are the exercises in simple numbers which train it for the larger problems beyond. The *motive* for economy is what makes one's mind sordid, or the reverse. You want to spare that you may spend. Let me call one thing to your notice ; that lavish, careless people are the very ones who are mean in quiet ways. The woman who disdains to save on her grocery bills, or to think whether a ton more coal is burnt in a season than is necessary, is the very one who will feel that she can't afford to subscribe for a magazine, or buy a book, but will borrow her neighbor's library books, and leave her to pay the fines for keeping them out over time, beside preventing her from drawing a new one, which is more. She will allow, perhaps, a poorer acquaintance to pay for carriage fare and lunches, instead of insisting on paying her own as she ought ; she will let a plain sort of visitor come half a dozen miles to see her on business and go away faint and tired without offering the slightest refreshment ; she is the woman to drive past

poor Mrs. Martin hurrying over the long, hot walk to the station without five minutes to spare, and never think of offering the vacant seat in the carriage; and she will see Alice Hathaway's Christmas work at a standstill weeks for want of the right colors in silk, nor ever dream of giving her the odd skeins left in her own basket. Small kindnesses do not occur to her.

You know Mrs. Reeves has the name all over town of being a close woman because she will not pay high prices at the shops, won't buy eggs at fifty cents a dozen for everyday cookery, or take turkeys at twenty-eight cents a pound when she can buy them of the farmers for eighteen pence. Her servant girls denounce her stinginess because she puts them on allowance of fuel and provisions for the week's work, and looks after the soap and matches. She wears fifty-cent thread gloves whenever possible, instead of long Swedish ones at \$2.50, beside a score of other economies which other ladies criticise as beneath them. But the washerwoman in her kitchen Mondays always finds her big cup of hot coffee and sandwich ready at eleven o'clock when she begins to remember that she ate a cold breakfast at six o'clock, and walked two miles

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before work. Old Miss Clay, who lives by herself in lodgings, is always asked to stay to tea when she calls, and has some cold chicken or plum pudding put up for next day's lunch. Daddy Mills, who is left alone now his wife and daughter are dead, has his washing and mending done every week and his poor old clothes kept in good repair. Half a dozen families have their magazine and weekly newspaper sent them out of the money saved on soap, starch and matches alone, and every year Mrs. Reeves buys a rare book, or new picture, out of the saving on coal bills. On a limited income she sends her sister's girls to school, and gives them expensive lessons in music and painting. No wonder she wears darned gloves and, as I heard her hired girl tell ours in the kitchen one evening, "never has a loaf of black cake in the house any more than if she was a washwoman herself." She knows how to put the greater before the less. Lecture's over. I hear Esquire Fitch and the minister talking along street as they always do. Would you have thought it was so late?

## VI. — TWO TEAKETTLES.

THREE miles and back from the Mattapan woods for palm willows and violets is good excuse for feeling rather tired on a fair spring day. You and I would both be better for a fresh cup of tea if it were not such trouble to make it. To fill the kettle, start the fire, wait for the water to boil, to rinse the teapot, get out the caddy and go through the service of making tea for the entire family is too much for tired creatures, and we will sit around from now till teatime, an hour and a quarter, drooping and half-comfortable, pretending to work and doing nothing well for want of that small refreshment.

How much of their lives people waste going on with aching heads and flagging energies, doing their work only half as well and half as fast as they would after a cup of tea or soup had revived and freshened them. Your feet burn and are so swelled after the

tramp that you are minded to give up walking for the rest of the season. Nothing is better for that exhausting pain than bathing the feet at once with hot water — a brief and effective remedy — only there is no hot water.

I forgot! We are at aunt Jane's, who has taken out rights of comfort large and small. The fire is low in the range, but there is a plenty of hot water in the boiler with its covering of felt which keeps the heat in night and day, beside a steaming kettle, ready for a foot-bath or fomentation, and, as I live! a second teakettle, bright as new, holding three pints, and just off the boil, as old ladies say.

Now for aunt Jane's nice ways, which are blissful to watch as the single kerosene lamp-stove is lighted with the touch of a match, and the small kettle falls to singing at once, and the little brown Japanese teapot comes out, kept for tea-drinking at odd times; the small caddy whose top holds just two spoonfuls of the leaf, and the old teaboard, a beech oval fitted in black lacquer rim — why, one makes tea for the pleasure of it, in such fashion. Drank from fluted teacups with a thin slice of fresh lemon floating in each, with



out milk or sugar, how delicate and inspiring it is! They tell of people who put a drop of ottar of roses in the tea-caddy to flavor the pekoe, but aunt Jane knows a trick worth two of that, and mixes fresh apple petals, kin blossoms to those of the tea-plant, with her fine tea, which is scented like the costly "imperial" teas that come through Russia. You know the delicious perfume of the highest qualities of tea comes from drying the flowers of the plant with the tender young leaves. But what use would the fluted "old pink" china or the inlaid caddy have been without the ever ready kettle on the boil? And who but aunt Jane would have the simple device of keeping two teakettles with constant relays of hot water? In Mrs. Oliphant's story of *The Curate in Charge*, charming as all her stories are, another aunt Jane, an old-fashioned gentlewoman, lays down the rule to her nieces that "in a good house the kettle is always boiling," ready for fresh tea which Englishwomen like any hour of the day. Not only for tea, but for twenty other and more important uses, hot water is so constantly needed that the teakettle has become the symbol of home comforts, which are

the only reason and excuse for having homes at all.

When you come to think of it, why shouldn't every house have two teakettles, and hot water on call? Just because they don't think of it, or give that little time, that small sum of money and contrivance which insures life-long comfort on this and a score of other points. The cost of the second kettle usually stops people from providing it, for it is curious how the outlay of a few shillings will scare them from some convenience which would save them time, labor and trouble, at least once a day the year long. You see aunt Jane's large teakettle is an old-fashioned black iron one, which she bought in a small shop for thirty cents because it was old style, though it never had been used. Now the iron teakettle has the advantage over tin of holding the heat longer, and keeping water hot better. So Philena, the hired help, told us her grandmarm said, and we found the same thing in Count Rumford's Philosophy, which has a great many things of interest to housekeepers. It is curious how the grandmothers find out by experience what the philosophers discover by experiment. For my part, I find it impossible to do without either. Well, the big

teakettle costing only thirty cents, aunt Jane could afford to buy a small, convenient tin one for forty cents to keep polished and on its good behavior for tea-making and sick-room use. When the children want to make paste for scrap-books, or Lucy wants to do up her lace ruffles, or somebody wants hot lemonade for a cold, there is never any waiting for boiling water, and waste of time and patience, because of the two teakettles, one of which is hot if the other isn't.

Another convenience at aunt Jane's is the two dustpans and the chamber-broom hung in the back entry up-stairs. You know when one has been cutting out work in her room there will be litter, or when the boys are not careful to use the door-mat, they will leave traces of mud on the carpet, and what a trouble it is to run down-stairs after broom and dustpan. Aunt Jane said she never could afford to carry her one hundred and forty pounds of weight up and down-stairs every time a room needed extra sweeping, when a new broom cost thirty-five cents, and a second dustpan ten. While she was about it, she would have a dust-bin too, and if you lift the

cover of that large box in brown linen and red trimming in the corner of the passage up-stairs, you will find it is an old tin cracker-box, to receive sweepings from the bedrooms. They are all swept thoroughly once a week of course, but between whiles all transient sweepings go into this box, which is emptied at convenience. Aunt Jane counts that this second broom and pan which cost forty-five cents in all, have saved her going up and down-stairs at least five times a week for the last five years, or thirteen hundred times, and allowing that interest on the first investment might make the price of her broom and things seventy-five cents, one cent fare saves her from going up and down seventeen times, and she considers it cheap. I know a family who went without a new dustpan ten years after they needed it, and made the old one do, because they never felt they could afford to pay half a dollar — country price — just for a convenience. But the mistress said when she had to get a new one finally, and thought of all the back-aches and vexations about sweeping up she might have saved by getting it before, she felt too big a fool to stay in the family. There are savings which

are found to be frightfully expensive in the end.

The boys' bed stands in a corner of their room, away from the windows, and inconvenient to reach for making. You know how unwholesome it is for any one who sleeps at the back of a bed in such a position where no fresh air reaches it. Yet how tiresome it is to pull the bedstead out every night, and push it out of the way in the morning, the room being too small to allow its standing out. The casters are too small. Get a large size with broad wood wheels, and you can push the bedstand back and forth easier than you can move a chair. The boys can pull it out at night into the best air in the room, and shove it back to give them room for dressing. You can move it about as you like to tuck in the clothes when making the bed, and leave it out to air when no one is in the room; a touch will put it in place any time, and the broad tires will not wear the carpet like small iron ones. It is a trifle to see that the furniture in a house has easy casters; but the difference in ease of moving and keeping it neat will surprise you. It's the principle of having two teakettles over again — that comforts are always cheap.

I go frequently to a restaurant, where the dinner is good enough to tempt one, but there is always a moment of pain from the sharp squeak of chairs moved on the marble floor. It gives me a nervous dread from the moment of entering till that agonizing sound has pierced my ears and gone into the roots of my teeth. There is a little invention of rubber caps for chair legs which allows chairs to move on any surface without wear or sound, and public or private dining-rooms where the rubber-shod chairs are in use, have a sense of luxury most grateful. So many people use polished wood floors, I wonder that the rubber caps do not come into general use. When families for convenience live in the kitchen a good deal, or have painted floors for the dining-room, these soundless chairs would be just as desirable as on tile pavements. The rubber caps cost five cents apiece, less by the dozen, fit any chair, and wear for years. I don't know a greater comfort to nervous mothers than to provide a set for the chairs in use, and they save carpets remarkably.

Boys are noisy creatures, that stamp about the house with the tread of a hose company, wear carpets

and bring mud indoors insufferably. I don't know anything that wants to be rubber shod more than they, and the remedy for this noisy tread is to treat them as you would the chairs. Have the shoemaker glue a thin sheet of rubber on the sole of the heavy boots, and their power of disturbance is gone. The rubber does not make the feet damp with perspiration, because it does not cover the shoe; it saves the soles from many a wetting, and mud does not stick to it as to leather, for which it seems to have an affinity. The rubber sole can't squeak, or clatter, and the only reason I can discover why every boy and girl in the country isn't rubber shod in this way is because it would make the shoes last too long for the interest of the shoe business. I remember having my shoes rubber soled when a schoolgirl, and how soundless and what a comfort they were.

Did you ever happen to make a call in a house when you wanted to be sure your hair and bonnet were right after a windy walk, and can you ever forget the dismay of finding no mirror either in the hall or parlor? If I had not more than once found houses that were well furnished otherwise deficient in this

respect, I would not mention the point. But some good people seem to think mirrors mere vanity and expense outside of a bedroom. I wish to plead for their right use and convenience about the house. A mirror should not be the friend of vanity, and it is a very poor, weak soul to which it so ministers. It should be, and is, the friend of all that is neat and becoming in dress and behavior, the silent, irresistible conscience which reflects our ill humors, awkwardness and very accidents, without fear or favor, and it is my private conviction there can hardly be too many such glasses about a house.

It is said one reason why the French are such agreeable, well-bred persons is because large mirrors abound in their houses, reflecting their movements and making them conscious of awkward actions at once. There is truth in this, and there can hardly be a better educator in any room than a large mirror.

If you can have things in the house at all to your liking, see that it is well provided with good glasses. One in the hall, certainly, for even the boys like to take a peep, and see that their hair is brushed as they fly out for play, and the young man with the gas bills



likes to settle his collar and hat as he waits, and callers always want a glimpse of themselves as they pass in, unless they are carriage people, and have a dressing glass over the front seat. There should be one in each living room, not necessarily a large or prominent glass, but the largest in the sitting-room.

The fashion of mantel mirrors is too good to be given up, as it reflects the attitudes of the group about the fire, and rebukes sprawling or awkward sitting. A glass not over a yard long can be hung sideways and tilted to give a pretty good view of the interior of a room. A wide glass hung on the wall opposite the boys' seats in the dining-room, would sooner or later make them aware of sundry tricks of manner you will try long to cure, unless they are brought to see themselves. Mirrors are not expensive compared with what they used to be ten years ago, and a second-hand one reflects just as well as a new one. I suggest that you look closely after the small savings, to allow plenty of "bright reflections on manners," as somebody calls glasses about your house.

It is, after all, simply a case of two teakettles over again.

## VII.—A COMFORTABLE KITCHEN.

WHY do people always build kitchens at the back of the house?

I always said when my house was built it should have two fronts, one before and one behind, but no back door where pails, barrels and rubbish should gather, no muddy stoop or trampled ground about the steps. Instead, it should be like one sweet cottage I knew, whose paths led by croquet lawn and tennis ground at the side, to a surprise of trim grass-plots and flower beds behind the house, where a peach-tree was trained to shade the pantry window, from which one could pluck its leaves for flavoring custards and creams, and a Boursault rose climbed over the back door to the kitchen roof, when it laid its tresses of crimson cup-roses in the sun. A broad greensward, no less lovely that it was convenient for bleaching, and a low spreading orchard

lay behind the flower plots, all secluded, fair and sweet as a walled English garden.

Why should women and girls banish themselves to dull rear regions where all manner of rubbish is at home? The other day I drove by a large farm with a big brick house, whose owner, a rich Dutchman, built the largest front room for the kitchen, because, he said, his wife spent most of her time there, and she should have the very best room in the house. Everybody said he was shrewd and right about it, though nobody thought of following his example.

You want to make the kitchen pleasant, Anna Maria, so that you won't grow tired of staying in it day after day. Do not go to an extreme like some weak-minded, fanciful women who want pictures and book shelves in the kitchen, forgetful that steam and flies will do their best to spoil frames, glass and bindings; who want bits of carpet about, to catch one's feet and be always lying awry, and a lounge and work basket, to become scented with cooking. The clean, orderly kitchen is always attractive by its neatness, and all you need to add is a splint rocking-chair and boxes of sweet herbs and flowers at the

windows. It wants a wide east window for the morning sun, and a south one for cheerfulness.

Were I building a house the kitchen should not be wholly at the back, but project at the side so as to have one window for the pleasant front yard and the road. It should be lighted on three sides with a south porch shaded by awning in summer, to be taken down and give the full sun in winter. Its walls should be painted cream gray, pinky drab, or brownish buff, colors cheerful but not readily defaced, from which fly-specks and soil could be washed as from stone-china. Papered walls are objectionable in a kitchen, for the steam loosens the paper and it absorbs smells and cannot be cleaned when soiled. Whitewash rubs off, and it costs more in three years to have whitewashing done than to paint the walls in the first place. The floor should be even and solidly laid of hard pine, oak or maple, the first finished in good yellow paint, or in the dark shellac polish like black walnut, and which cleans easily. Oak, maple or any of the hard woods need a light shellac finish which shows the grain and color of the wood. Do not have the floor oiled, however wiseacres may advise it.

Oiled wood holds dust and lint, and always looks dark and damp. Oilcloth looks well, but has no advantage over a well-laid floor.

Do not have a high ceiling which gives you more space to heat in cold weather and more work in keeping walls clean the year round. Have windows to let down at the top and a ventilator in the chimney to draw off all the cooking odors. Learn to keep your kitchen and entries free from villianous smells of suds, of cooking cabbage, fish and beans, which give housework most of its vulgar associations. It takes the soul out of the sweetest country walk by new-mown fields or blossoming orchards, to pass a house where the smell of frying doughnuts or corned beef informs the neighbors what the family are to have for dinner. There should be an airy little passage between kitchen and living rooms to keep odors of cookery from wandering about the house, and as you do your own work, you can afford serviceable improvements.

The best housekeepers require but a small supply of utensils, and you will find the fewer things you have to take care of the better. In fact, half

the housekeeping aids advertised are more trouble than help. Among the things you need to save time and strength are these: A strong white wood table for baking and ironing with top at least 3x6 feet, and drawer, but no leaf, for it can be framed more firmly without one. Instead have a light, small table to move about easily where you want it, to hold the pans for shelling peas and paring apples, or to lay the starched things on ironing days. Also, have a broad drop-shelf with strong hinged brackets to fold back underneath, so that it can hang against the wall when not in use. A wire cupboard should hang over the cooking table with spice, soda and small things used in cookery. Do not have the cupboard for iron ware under the sink where more than a suspicion of dampness, close odors, grime and black beetles is apt to gather, and where your back must ache stooping for what you want. Have the sink, whether of iron or wood, neatly painted on the underside, and supported by stout metal brackets without any casing, leaving the floor underneath open and dry, as well as making the sink easier to work at. Have a nice painted woodbox beside the stove with a hinged half-cover,

and a cupboard above for iron ware. This brings cooking utensils in easy reach, where you want them without stooping. The upper shelf in this is the place for flat-irons, where they will be out of dust and rust. They are always in the way on the mantel, and grow rusty in closets away from the fire.

It will save half your strength to keep things used together close to each other, in convenient range ; the poker, stovelifter and hearthbroom close to the stove on nails just the height of your hand, to save stooping for them, the cooking-table next the pantry door, that you need not cross the room for everything wanted in baking, and the tubs, washbench, rubbing-board, clothespins and clothes-stick all in one large closet. It is a relief to find the broom and dustpan always together, and the duster at hand. The china closet should be between dining-room and kitchen, with a large slide window opening on a broad shelf next the sink, in the corner adjoining, if you want the greatest convenience in washing dishes and putting them away. One little point which greatly adds to ease and safety in going about a kitchen in a hurry, is to have the corners of all tables and

shelves rounded, that you need not run against them.

All the woodwork of doors, windows and baseboards ought to have the plainest mouldings, for scrolls and beadings catch the dust and are hard to clean. Be sure to have brackets at different heights each side the window for shelves which may be shifted as your plants need. Shallow boxes of curled parsley and sweet herbs should be growing in the warm, moist air of the kitchen, which often suits plants better than any other part of the house. Have the clock on a shelf with your account sheet and some good receipt books in easy reach, and a light tool box in the closet, with clawhammer, screwdriver, wrench, gimlet, a ball of string and assorted nails, tools you can buy for ten cents apiece, which will be no end of help on occasions.

You want a closet for tubs, brooms, pails and such large things, a closet three feet deep at least, with door or doors to open the entire front, so that things can be taken out, and it can be swept or cleaned easily. Nothing like dark closets and corners behind doors for collecting mold and dust. If you are bent on doing work well and easily, you will have these im-



provements made as you are able. Your father will soon see that it pays to supply a neat, economical housekeeper with conveniences, and it costs no more to frame a closet with cheap doors than with lath and plaster. One thing more, and that is a firkin, or large pail with tight wooden cover for garbage. Now remember, no decent kitchen ever has a sour, ill-smelling receptacle for slops, and leavings of any kind — no decent house has ugly, ill-smelling things anywhere on the premises.

How are you going to help it, do you ask?

Unless your scraps are to be saved for a cow or pig, burn all leavings and parings, the refuse from tables, and the scrapings as fast as made. Open all the back drafts of the stove, put the leavings on the hot coals and let them dry and burn, which they will do in a few minutes. With the drafts open there will be neither smell nor smoke. If the scraps must be saved, have a waste pail with a tight cover, or a covered firkin large enough to empty a panful of parings into in a hurry without dropping any on the floor. Never pour slops with the waste for it sours and ferments sooner. Have the pail emptied twice a day

in warm weather and scrubbed with water and a few turns of an old broom, which cleans it without touching your hands to it. But if rinsed, drained and dried in the sun even your waste pail will be as neat, wholesome and well kept as any of your belongings. Every washday all slop pails and barrels should be scrubbed with hot suds and a broom outside and in, scalded and aired, when I think you will not have to shrink from them as disagreeable subjects. Kitchen furnishing shops supply large tight garbage firkins neatly painted with covers, which never need be obnoxious to sight or smell. A sour waste barrel in a corner always foul with droppings is not to be tolerated, for it is enough to cause fever in warm weather. You must not consider it beneath you to look after such details of house and yard, to see that everything in sight or out of sight is wholesome, clean and safe as it is possible to be. You have been taught to despise the slovenliness which wears a good dress and bright ribbons with unwashed skin and careless underclothing; learn also to despise and dread the housekeeping which is satisfied with pretty parlor and chambers, while the closets are unswept and

musty, and the back sheds and cellar full of half-decayed rubbish. Dread it because such neglect causes ill health. Do not rest till your working part of the house is as pleasant as the well-furnished part.

Of all rooms in a house, I delight in a well-kept kitchen, for no other room is so given up to good works and consummate cleanliness, so washed and scoured and polished, till it smells of the sanctity of neatness. When the western sun shone broad and merry over the sparkling window, yellow floor and white tables, when a savor of sweet marjoram and lavender from the window-boxes was in the air, and the shining stove with its bright teakettle and simmering pans was a shrine of good cheer, I have taken portfolio and books out in my kitchen to the light-stand and little shaker chair to enjoy the sparkling humor, the warm home radiance, the neatness and seemliness which made the place akin to poetry and clear thoughts. It was not too homely to read Tennyson's songs or *Blackwood's Magazine* in, with the fresh plants in the window, the pears baking to rich syrup in the oven, and the black cat with golden eyes, purring in her satin fur in the best of the sun-

light. Didn't I learn "*Mariana in the Moated Grange*," and "*Where Claribel low lieth*," and Bayard Taylor's Arab songs from the book propped open on the ironing table, catching a stanza between the ruffles of a white skirt or the turn of a sleeve? Nor was it less tidy of a morning, when one was rushing round to get early breakfast, for sister Maggie knew how to keep order in the stir; the stove was brushed clean, the floor swept, the kettles nice about their jackets, the dishes ranged in order on the table, not dropped out of chaos, and everything was clean in spite of use. It was pleasant baking days, preserving days and Saturdays, nor absolutely tedious washing days, for Maggie had the knack of keeping things at their best. As she crossed a disorderly room the chairs went into place, the baskets into their closet, half a dozen unnecessary pots and pans retired to the storeroom, and the contents of sink and tables fell into array, the blind was pulled straight and the rug set smooth. Slack women looked on in admiration and talked of "her gift" for housekeeping, as if every mortal with head and hands could not train them to see at a glance what needs to be done, and to do it as quickly.

## VIII.—TO CLEAN AND TO KEEP CLEAN.

THE neighbors who remember her, speak of my grandmother as a pattern housekeeper of the old style. With eleven children, a large circle of acquaintances to entertain and a fastidious husband, she managed to do and direct everything for house and family in the nicest manner, without losing her serenity, or being other than delicately neat in dress. In the Yankee phrase, "dirt wouldn't stick to her." Therefore I have always had great respect for one of her favorite maxims handed down, that "one keep-clean was worth a great many make-cleans."

Still one must make clean before she can keep clean, and Irish Katy has not left the kitchen in the glorious neatness we were talking about last time. I don't envy you the housecleaning, but if bringing purity, order and safety into the dark corners of the

world is a heavenly mission, yours is one—and where should such purity and safety begin if not in one's own home? You have read of Miss Octavia Hill, the English lady who rented tenement houses in the worst part of London, and had them cleaned, taking part, I believe, in the scrubbing and whitewashing with her own hands, to give the wretched poor a glimpse of that cleanliness which is next to godliness. It was one of the finest missions of the century, and I have thought some homes where education and taste had place, needed a similar visitation. One would think the pictures would leave the walls, the books come down from the shelves, the tidies and knickknacks get up and shake off the dust, in homes kept with the negligent half-order, which is all people seem to attempt now, their time being too much taken up with Kensington work, Tennyson clubs and "socials," to see that their houses are pleasantly or wholesomely kept. They let the poisonous dust gather under the beds and in corners, allow contagion to breed in vile, damp places left by slops, and food becomes tainted in their close closets, their very garments gather musty odors while they are taken

up with finer things as they suppose — as if one read poetry with a face unwashed ! 'There is more sincere refinement in the clean bare floors, spotless pantries and sweet, airy bedrooms of plain homes where pictures and books are luxuries, than in fine houses where everything is attended to save the cardinal virtues of health and neatness. Thorough cleanliness in every room and corner, from doorstep to roof-tree, is what you must exact before you lay pretty carpets, hang illuminated mottoes, and fill the windows with flowers and the shelves with books and china. Nor is this strict neatness going to take up all your time and strength as foolish women try to persuade you. A girl or woman in good health ought to be equal to taking care of a small house or flat in the best manner and have half her time left for study, visits and needlework. Women find housework tiresome and dragging because they never half learn it ; and partly because they make up their minds to hate it as some girls hate the piano. I should think women would hate housekeeping the way some of them do it. Can't you take it up for something better, a gracious ideal that is to be the reality of your

artist friends' pictures and your favorite authors' kindest scenes, where everybody who enters will find himself at his best, under its sunny conditions of comfort?

The first step toward this is, to make things clean; the next is to learn how to keep them so.

Katy meant to leave the kitchen neat, for she mopped the floor, blacked the stove, and wiped the windows. Put on your oldest calico (let it be a clean one) and your sweeping-cap, and we will see how much is to be done after her. You don't want to imitate the nonsense of novel heroines, who always appear in the kitchen with white collar and spotless cuffs. A well bred woman never wears anything not suited to her work. You may put on your lily-white cuffs after the cleaning, but a white handkerchief round your neck to keep the dust out, and plain sleeves, are the proper dress to-day. Have everything eatable covered closely and put away, tables and sink cleared, plenty of hot water, two pails, an old broom and a clean new one, two scrubbing brushes, a stumpy whisk broom for cleaning windows, a stout nut picker or sharp skewer of hard



wood to get the dirt out of cracks, plenty of cloths for wiping glass and paint. Old flannel or merino underwear make soft mop-cloths which wring easily. You must have good tools to work with, and a well set mop and large cloths will do the cleaning in half the time of poor ones. If you haven't old cloths enough, it pays to buy a yard or two of coarse towelling for floor cloths, and sixpenny unbleached cotton for wiping paint. For your cleaning outfit you will want:—

A bath-brick which will cost 5 cents, a peck of clean sand, 10 cents, a cake of mineral soap, 8 cents, a pound of whiting 5, pound of washing soda 5, a can of solid lye or potash, 10, a quart of cheap ammonia, 25, mop, 50, broom, 25, two whisks, 10, flannel, 25, 2 yards of towelling, 20, 2 yards of cotton, 13; in all \$4.16, say \$5, to allow for difference in prices. You would pay this for the poorest servant one fortnight, or for a charwoman half a day each week in two months, who would not do your work nearly as well, and would waste twice the supplies you will want in the time. I make this little calculation to show that you save enough to allow yourself every needed

help which women are apt to stint themselves.

All things ready, sweep the cobwebs down with your clean broom which will not leave a streak along the walls, get up on your step-ladder, and with brush and dust-pan clear the dust from door and window tops, and dust the mouldings with the whisk broom. Brush the walls, and dust the base-boards with the broom, then sweep the floor with light strokes without flourishing to raise a dust, and instead of stabbing at the skirting of the wall, run your broom along it, which will clean all the dust out, a point which makes much of the difference between well-swept rooms and careless ones. Use the whisk in the angles of the floor and mouldings, where the dust and fluff by long lying have felted together, or a sharp skewer or steel pick will perhaps be the only thing to take them out. You will find dust caked in corners, where Katy washed the floor without thorough sweeping or thorough rinsing after. Around the carelessly kept threshold are likely to be collections of this kind which must be scraped out with an old dull knife, kept for cleaning. Sweep with windows open if the weather will allow, and when through, shake the door

mat, brush out the entry and porch, and go out of doors while the dust settles, to give your lungs fresh air. Sweeping is the best exercise for chest and arms. English ladies of rank wishing fine forms as well as pretty faces have taken to brooms and bed making to develop their arms and shoulders.

Time yourself to do this sweeping in fifteen minutes, then sit down for a five minutes' rest. You can train yourself to do all the work of a house without fatigue, by taking short rests at intervals. So take the shaker chair while we talk about dust and what it is made of.

House dust is minute particles of soil from the streets, brought in by the feet, or sifted through door and window casings, fine ashes from the fire, mixed with minute scales of skin from our bodies, and fluff from clothing and carpets. These particles, nearly invisible themselves, collect in such amount that they soon show in an unswept room, in the locks of lint which gather under tables, along walls, and undisturbed places. This waste goes on day and night, grinding of dust from roads, wear of clothes and carpets, fine dust flying from fires and atoms from

human bodies. It irritates the lungs to breathe ; ever so little damp begins a ferment in it, poisoning the air, and the only safe way to dispose of it is to sweep it up and burn it. Don't throw sweepings about the yards or vaults, but burn them instantly, or if that is not convenient, keep them in a barrel to burn the first chance. This grime on the paint left by Katy's careless washing is the sediment of dust in the water and dust settled in the steam of cooking, which if not often aired and washed, leaves the dingy look of frowsy kitchens.

Begin to wash doors and base-boards and you will see the annoyance dust harbors. In the mouldings of doors and windows run the dust-lice, which gnaw books, paint and wood, and are ready to fall into food. Smeary paint invites that ugly moth, which delights in nothing so much as a greasy spot in a warm room, and which will lay its eggs next in the dining-room carpet. In that dusty corner behind the woodbox, a venturous ant has made her nest, and some July morning you will be surprised by her emigrant family in the store room, especially if spilt sugar and meal are left to tempt them there. Under the

sink, in dampness and grease, water beetles and roaches increase like wharf rats. All these and more in swarms I have found in the melancholy process of clearing after a kitchen girl who "could not be at the trouble" of keeping things entirely clean. These insects thrive on refuse and they cannot be regarded as safe or agreeable things in a kitchen, running over food and leaving corners offensive with their traces.

After you have swept and dusted everything by brushing it, begin cleaning. If you have a painted wall to wash, the best and easiest way is to close doors and windows, take the cover off a boiler of hot water on the fire, and leave the steam to settle in the room for ten minutes. Steam is penetrating, and it will soften the spots and soil so that nothing will be easier than to wash, rinse and wipe the wall yard by yard. Steaming leaves doors and windows easy to clean, but to have paint look clear and bright, it must be rinsed with clean water, and wiped quickly dry. Don't take a pailful and scrub with it till it thickens with dust, but use a large tin basin, and change the rinsing water as often as it grows cloudy, and as the

wiping cloths grow damp, rinse and dry them by the fire or in the sun, while you use fresh ones. If the paint is soiled with finger-marks, rub with mineral soap, remembering it is not the paint you want to get rid of, but the soil. Or, pour two tablespoonfuls of ammonia into the basin of warm water and rinse well after it. Old paint, especially old grained paint, is brightened by using a tablespoonful of potash solution in a basin of water, swabbing the woodwork with it swiftly, and rinsing with cold clear water without wiping. Delicate paint is best cleaned with whiting on a moist flannel, wiping with a wet cloth and drying quickly. By using a swab to wet the paint a few minutes before you begin to clean it, scrubbing mouldings with a large brush or the whisk broom, always rubbing with the grain of the work, not across, rinsing without slop and keeping plenty of clean dry cloths to wipe with, you will not find the cleaning very dreadful business.

The paint done, wash the window frames, taking care to wet them all over to soak the dirt, scrubbing the top and lower edge with strong suds, scraping with a knife the ancient deposits of grime and flies,

finishing with a wash of potash water to extract the soil. The soap, sand and potash are for the unpainted part of the sash and casings only, for each will ruin paint. And now comes the trying part of your work, to clear out the corners of each pane of sash, and the grooves of moulding. The steel nut picker comes in play here, followed by the whisk which will wash out corners better than anything else. Scrub round the window lock on the middle sash, clear all the dust from it with the pick, leave no crevice about your window that is not absolutely free from dust and smooth. Very likely a lazy painter has not dusted the corners of the sash perfectly before painting, and they look woolly: clear it with the pick. If there is paint on the glass, scour it off with mineral soap, or touch it with strong potash water, and then scour. Use no soap to wash glass, but rub greasy spots with whiting or ammonia, then rinse, drain and wipe with dry clean cotton cloths. Keep old pillow cases and skirts for this use, and for dusters. You can afford to take time and pains over such work, for it will never be troublesome again while your housekeeping lasts.

Now for scouring tables, chairs and shelves, all which in a kitchen should be unpainted, to clean more perfectly. Your tables with white pine top and chestnut frame, the chairs of varnished chestnut, the shelves of clear inch pine, should always after the old English standard of good housewives, be clean enough to show the grain of the wood as when first planed. To keep them so you must scour them after the good old fashion with soap and sand, for there is nothing like sand to clean and smooth the grain of wood. Take out the drawers and wash them, for Katy has left finger-marks inside, and crumbs, till they are not fit to keep clean cloths and utensils in. Now the potash water comes in use. From the can chip out a tablespoonful, dissolve in an iron kettle of boiling water, and you have a willing servant which will do all sorts of hard, disagreeable work for you. It is strong and effective, and you must use it with very great care, for a drop of this solution will take the color out of your dress, and eat holes in it; will take the paint off wood, remove grease from wood, iron, or stone like magic, kill bad smells, sweeten dark, damp corners, whiten dull floors, remove rust, brighten zinc,



in short, I never can keep house without this trusty chemical. Never let your hands touch it, for it will wrinkle and make them sore. Apply it with a swab, and rinse the article on which it is used at once. Keep the kettleful of the solution hot to cleanse cooking utensils; one spoonful of this in a basin of water will be strong enough to wash paint or most woodwork with. Use it to take finger-marks from table-drawers; scour and rinse them and set to drain in the sun to sweeten, till every trace of damp has disappeared. Turn the table upside down and clean the soil and fly marks there. You will probably find spider-webs and eggs in that coigne of vantage, and a colony of cockroaches, to dislodge which, swab the cracks and joints well with hot strong potash, scrub and rinse, and when dry, apply plenty of kerosene with a feather, saturating all cracks. The smell soon disappears, but no insects will take a fancy to keep house there again.

Swab the zinc under the stove with potash to clean it, letting the solution stand a few moments before rinsing off. Next collect all jars, pans and cooking ware for a grand cleaning. They are not smooth to

the touch, nor do they smell sweet to the practised senses of the true housekeeper. Washed in grimy dish-water, wiped on doubtful towels, left in an airless cupboard or pantry, they do not belong to our order of thorough neatness. There is a trace of sweetmeats in the apple-sauce crock, and a pasty rim in the yeast jar, while hot lard has been suffered to soak into a third. The tin pans have black seams from which the grease can be scraped with a pin, the sugar firkins are smeared outside, whatever they may be within, and the starch, sago and other nest-boxes are not nice to handle. Take the jars first: put each in the kettle of potash upside down for five minutes. Take out carefully into a large pan of clean hot soapsuds, wash with a dish mop, scour sticky spots, drain, wipe, and set where the sun will shine full into it out of doors or at an open window. In winter set over the hot stove to air. Not till this course of purifying is gone through after the reign of a careless servant is kitchen ware fit for handling.

The tins come next for a thorough washing and sunning, to be polished at leisure another day. Then the firkins are emptied, swabbed outside and around

the rim with hot potash, scoured with sand and soap, rinsed and set in the sun. The starch boxes the same. The pantry shelves if unpainted are cleaned with sand, first taking out grease spots with potash. The floor is washed, all spots of dried dough, flour and meal soaked and scraped off with that invaluable old knife. While the pantry dries with door and window wide open to air it, wash the rest of its contents, cleaning the flour bin or barrel of spots with a moist cloth and mineral soap without wetting it much and then wipe with a damp cloth. Wash all pegs and nails and hooks in the wall, swabbing them with a basin of hot potash, for they often become so crusted with fly-marks and greasy fingers, that they are not fit to hang clean things on. The flat-irons will be none the worse for a dip in potash to take any grease off, washing and drying them on the stove. Then put the potash in your largest kettle and boil the other kettles, sauce-pans, frying and bakepans in the lye, ten minutes apiece, when you will find all the greasy crust on the outside scrape and scale off, and a little scouring with a brush and sand will leave all your "kitchen battery" smooth, innocent, and safe to touch,

as even the menial things should be in your kitchen.

The old-fashioned story of the two maiden ladies whose kettles and frying-pans were so clean "you could get up from hemming a cambric handkerchief and rub your fingers on the bottom of each one without soiling the work when you came back," was always delightful to me, since I first heard it as a child. And though I never could bring my gridirons and saucepans to the same polish of neatness, still it has been a worthy model to aim after. As old "granther Hale" out in Tioga County used to say, "When I find anything too clean for me in this world, I can't expect to go to a better one."

## IX.—IN MY LADY'S CHAMBER.

THERE are two things I tell my girls it is impossible to be too particular about," said a good housekeeper. "One cannot be too nice about washing dishes or doing chamber work." And this, from one of the most graceful of hostesses used to entertaining the best company of the State—army officers and foreigners of distinction her guests—deserves your consideration.

"I always know," said another woman of the world, "whether the lady of the house is old-fashioned enough to look after the comfort of her guests herself, by the state of the toilet ware. If that is nice, the mistress has seen to it herself, for that is one thing servants will not do properly, unless her eye is on them." I will go farther, for it seems as if few mistresses themselves know how to provide the niceties of the bed-chamber in a house. There will be a set

of inlaid furniture, pillow overlays, ruffled and laced, a pink china toilet set, decorated splasher and mats, in the best bedroom of course, but how is the bed fitted and when was it aired, and is there a covered pitcher and glass for drinking water, and a soap dish with drainer that won't let your French soap dissolve in it, and a table you can write on comfortably, or a footstool of any sort, or a dozen other things for comfort. If the spare chamber has these, how is it with the family sleeping rooms, and your own bedroom, Anna Maria, if left to a careless servant or inexperienced girl.

Let me advise you to read Florence Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing* at once, in the beginning of your housekeeping, to learn the reason for the strict care of bedrooms for sick or well. The human body throws off by insensible perspiration, and by the breath, every night several ounces of waste animal matter, that has served its purpose, and which the system is in haste to get rid of. This waste is thrown off in a diffused form and is hardly noticed in a single night, being mostly absorbed by the night clothes and bedding. If these are hung in a draft of air, much of it

passes off, and if the sun shines on them out of doors, that has still more effect in changing the waste to a harmless form, which we mean by saying the sun "sweetens" things. But if the day clothing is left in a heap, the bed just as you get out of it, and the nightgown rolled up or hung in a close closet so that little air reaches them, the waste decomposes, and gives the unpleasant beddy odor complained of in sleeping rooms. Well may they have a disagreeable smell, for day by day a substance has been allowed to gather in the room, and penetrate everything there which if collected in mass, so as to be seen and recognized would be shocking and offensive to the last degree.

This waste which saturates clothes and bedding is absorbed again into your body which is more sensitive to such influences when asleep than awake. You breathe it, your skin absorbs it by those myriad, mysterious vessels of which it is full as a sponge, and the blood receives this waste again, to the injury of your health and complexion. You must make a habit to get rid of this, taking off all the clothing at night, especially that worn next the skin, and hanging each

piece separately where the air can reach it, and by airing the bed and bedclothes every day, giving them frequent days in the sunshine out of doors. The Southern method is a good one as told me by an old Louisiana housekeeper, who said that once a week, on Saturday, all the mattresses and bedclothes were put out in the sun, on frames for the purpose, and left all day, to be made up wholesome and sweet with the weekly fresh linen at night. This is a nice practice which all ought to adopt some sunny day each week.

When you get up in the morning, take off the blankets and spread them on chairs where the sun will fall on them if possible, throw both sheets off to leave the mattress to air, open the windows wide, and put the pillows in them to sun. Hang your night-dress where the air will blow through it. If you must wear an undervest all the time, have a change for night, and let me tell you, this little habit of changing the clothing next the skin frequently, has more to do with the complexion than you are aware. A girl who has an irritable skin will find a great difference in the clearness of her face if she puts on a freshly aired suit of merino every night and morning. By using



the skin to these changes and to bear the air a few minutes daily, you lessen the risk of taking colds and neuralgias, all your life.

As long as you have your mattress off, we may as well examine the bedstead a little. How often do you thoroughly dust it, springs, slats, corners, and mouldings, side rail and head-board, as well as the rest? Lay newspapers on the floor to catch the dust, and go over the bedstead, getting the last grain of dust out of every crevice, using pick and whisk broom or long bristle brush for the purpose, then if it has not been very carefully kept, touch the sockets for the slats with a swab wet in hot strong lye, setting a basin underneath that none may drip on the floor. Wash the ends of the slats with a scrubbing brush in strong suds, and then dip them in hot lye, and stand the boards in the sun to dry; swab every crack or rough knot in the slats and inner work of the bedstead with the lye, and when dry, saturate them with kerosene, putting it on with a feather, and apply it to every crevice of the mouldings and carvings. Polished wood always looks better for an application of kerosene, but this is for another purpose, to prevent any

possibility of future annoyance, for take one thing to heart about your beds and bedrooms, that where dust lies there will be insects. Dust the bedstead thoroughly at least twice a week if not every day, brush the slats and under parts at the weekly sweeping, and go over them with kerosene twice a year at house-cleaning times. Prevention is better than cure, and with this care you may insure yourself against a housekeeper's worst annoyances.

Why do we use the lye and kerosene both on the slats and rough places? Because insects select cracks and roughnesses of wood to lay their eggs, and harbor there, and the potash cleanses and removes all traces of them, while the kerosene soaks into the wood and keeps them away in future.

Now are the baseboards and corners of the room free from dust? I suppose of course the mantel and bureau are tidy, but how is it behind the glass, and on the wash-stand shelves, and in the corners of your closets? How do the bureau drawers look inside? It is rather dreadful to open bureaus after some young people have used them; for the lining shows ornamental touches in the shape of dark finger

marks, smears of hair oil and cold cream, dust of powder where one upsets the powder-box, fluffs from hair brushes and stray combings, old soiled ribbons, notes, rusty hair pins, under the paper lining on which their white neckties and fichus were laid. Charming isn't it and traces by which a lady would wish to be known. Remove the contents, take out the bureau drawers, and turn them upside down on a large newspaper or sheet on the floor to catch the dust, then brush the corners out with a whisk and wipe with a damp cloth. If soiled with grease or finger marks, remove these with mineral soap, or soda water, made by dissolving a bit of washing soda the size of a walnut in a gallon of boiling water. Rinse this off with a wet cloth, and sun the drawers an hour or two to make them wholesome, delicate, and pure as the nest of a girl's ribbons and laces ought to be.

When dry, line each drawer, large and small, even the comb cases, with clean manilla paper, fitting it nicely in the corners. You can afford to buy a quire of strong nice paper for this use, as one lining ought to last a year or two. White paper takes the color

out of silk things by the trace of lime left in bleaching it.

Now you can put your scent satchets and muslin bags of rose leaves and sweet clover among the handkerchiefs and fresh clothes, with a happy feeling that they are in keeping.

Keep comb and brush in a separate box or case, fitted with paper lining which must be often changed.

I will suggest that a hair brush which is washed once a week, as all brushes should be, first with ammonia and then rinsed with alum water and dried, is a more becoming neighbor to a young lady's toilet, among her bows and laces, than the specimen too often found.

Keep the toilet bottles wiped, the pincushion dusted, and the toilet mats beaten and aired, though nothing which will not wash really has any place there.

The washbasin, and all the ware about the washstand, needs washing or careful wiping every morning, but Katy's method of doing chamber work, or rather of not doing it, calls for immediate use of soap

and soda water. A clean light pail with plenty of hot suds for washing the toilet ware and clean dry cloths for wiping should go round with the slop pail every day. Bring the chamber pail now with hot water and a pitcherful of the strong hot soda water I told you of, and wash and scald every article, for you will find they need it. Often the sediment on pitchers and bowls will need sapolio to remove it, for it almost becomes part of the glaze in time. That neglected slop jar you will take out, and scrub with a broom and suds, not touching it with your hands; then let it stand with scalding soda water in it an hour or two, rinse, drain, and leave it all day in full sunshine.

Katy thought it enough to rinse it daily, or wipe it with a half-wet cloth. But you must know that dirty water leaves a slimy coating on whatever it stands in, wood, china, or tin, which is not rinsed off, and if left in this careless way, your slop jar takes a lining of putrid matter which gives the bad odor to ill-kept chamber ware.

Just fix it in your mind that a bad smell is Nature's warning of something evil and danger-

ous to be removed, and of all things dangerous about a house, neglected slops are to be dreaded. They contain fever germs, and are certain sooner or later to cause disease. Especially, if any epidemic is about, measles, scarlet fever, typhoid, dysentery or diphtheria, the floating invisible seeds of such sickness finds in the foul lining of waste pipes or slop jars and pails the very soil where it starts and spreads. The wisest doctors and scientific men are earnest in begging people to be more careful in these things about their houses, as the most terrible scourges are traced back to such beginnings as a sour sink, a neglected garbage barrel or ill-smelling slop pail. Above all things never allow slops to stand in bedrooms longer than can be helped. Run up the first thing after breakfast and empty them, leaving the beds till later if necessary, and at night, again empty what collects during the day, that it may not taint the air they breathe when asleep. This is the rule of the best English housekeeping, and in this country, and you must not think it too much trouble, for nothing is more necessary to health than such care, especially in warm weather.

Everything which holds water or slops in a bedroom should have a cover to keep the dust and bad air out of the water, and to keep the gases from the slops from spreading in the room. Miss Nightingale will tell you more about this matter.

I should not dwell on this if the care of bedrooms was not so shockingly misunderstood. Not one private house out of ten is well kept in this respect, and in boarding schools, etc., is shamefully neglected. I know of places where excellent French and music are taught with beautiful manners, where girls sleep in close rooms where the smell from neglected slops and wet carpets never dry about the washstands, is not to be described. Of course headaches, dull chills and nervousness are common, and I have heard of malignant fevers in schools and boarding-houses caused by the same neglect.

Every day you should wash the slop jars and pails with clean suds, and a whisk or swab kept for such things, then wipe, or set them to drain in sun and air. There is nothing like sunshine to search and cleanse away the last trace of ill things, for the rays of the sun have the chemical power to destroy the

germs of decay and disease in everything submitted to them. Sun your rooms, sun your clothes, your furniture and all utensils, to be sure that the inward refinement and purity we all strive for, I hope, extends to the sanctity of cleanliness and health of even the meanest article in your house. If the highest motives have weight with you, remember that as mistress or housekeeper, you are bound before God to watch over every point that can affect the health of those under your roof in food, comfort and cleanliness, most of all because more depends on them than any other of the conditions of life. Let no one with pettier views persuade you either that such care is beneath you as a lady, or is needless labor. It is the fashion to ridicule careful women who are anxious for the old brightness and strictness of housekeeping, but the worst old shrew who ever scrubbed and scolded deserves satire less than the women who neglect and slur over things of such vital importance as strict neatness and healthiness for "higher things," "claims of society," and the artistic cant of the day.

If you think this talk is too serious for the subject, remember that we elders see the end of many things



which for you are at their beginning. Even if you are careless about these things to a degree, typhoid fever may not visit your house this year or the next, and nothing worse than chronic catarrh, headaches, or neuralgia, may ever come of it. But you can count on some reward for negligence, for nature always repays slights.

When you make beds in the morning, let it be with clean apron and freshly washed hands. You will not want to leave the dinginess from possible rubs against sink or stove on white counterpanes, or to sully white pillows with careless handling. A separate apron for making beds should be kept for such work alone. Turn the mattress over, end for end, and fold the sheet smoothly under the four sides of the bed, so that tossing at night will not pull it out of place. The old-fashioned sheets, two and a half yards long, won't do this, but a sheet six quarters wide and three yards long is a good size to turn under and keep in place.

By the way, it is nice to have a case of stout sheeting made to slip over the mattress and tie, to keep it clean under the sheet. This cover can be washed, and in moving or handling beds saves wear and soil

enough to make it great economy to use one. The bolster needs a close case for, probably, the sheet will slip off and leave the ticking to be soiled by sleepers' heads.

The upper sheet is to be brought well down and turned under the foot, blankets laid the same way, the end of one coming a foot farther than the other at the head, not to lie heavy on the shoulders at night. A narrow blanket crossway at the foot of the bed is comfortable for cold feet. The coverlid should reach quite to the bolster, but not turn over at the top, be laid square and true, turned under the foot, and then with the rest of the clothes be tucked lightly inside the rails of the bedstead, not folded under the sides of the mattress, but left for the air to reach. The white coverlid should be large enough to come well down, and look as if the bed were a huge square iced cake, without a wrinkle anywhere, at corners or foot. The sheet is turned over the clothes a quarter of a yard at the top. You don't need telling that the same end of the sheet goes to the head of the bed each time, or that the same side should be next the bed and blankets always. There is something not

pleasant in having the end that was over your feet one night next your face the next, or the side you slept on two or three times turned next the clean blankets, to soil their fairness. In winter, have the footcovers or *duvets* as the French call them, comfortable of eider or goose down, a yard deep to lay across the lower end of the bed. These are very prettily made, because they are for the outside of the bed, and one side is crimson and another blue, or one is pearl gray with the other coral pink, or the top is pink brocaded with roses, and the under side rose red shading richly with it. It is well to have pretty things for your beds if you can afford them, because they make rooms attractive, and one tries to keep them in nice order, more than common ones. The boys' beds can be furnished with blood red or deep blue blankets, turkey red comfortables, and gay colored spreads, while the best room has all the glory of downy white blankets embroidered at the ends, the upper pair in pale blue or pink lamb's wool, fine as plush, the red and amber or rose color and pearl eider puffs and the marseilles quilt, or the guipure lace over velvet or garnet silk — just as you happen to afford it.

## X.—SUMMER COMFORT.

**Y**OU dread summer? Most housekeepers do, I believe; summer with its roses and dust, its sunshine and flies, its fresh fruits and hot cooking, its garden parties and the burden of entertaining company. Yet we were made to live through summer, and there must be some way in which it can be made endurable and welcome, even to a girl or woman who has the work and the cooking to do.

The house is clean by the first of May, let us say, at farthest, and the summer struggle is to keep it so through the season.

One of the weak-minded women was lamenting what hard work it was to keep entries and sitting-room carpets from being tracked over with spring mud, and how the dust would blow in from the street, and cover everything so she might go round with a duster in her hand all day and it wouldn't do a bit of good;

and then the flies seemed as if they would eat her up. The reason for her discomfort was not far to seek.

Outside her house was an untidy broken clay path, the grass worn away, leaving bare patches which would furnish mud and dust for the year round. The scraper was rickety, the mat clogged with last week's mud, the door-handles in the sitting-room were sticky from the children's fingers, and the breakfast-table stood, uncleared, inviting flies, with sugar bowl open, cakes and syrup left in the plates, and the crumbs unbrushed from the cloth, although Mary was washing the dishes in the kitchen, for we could hear her. If the woman had set out to have flies and all sorts of summer plagues she couldn't have made better arrangements. Now it is hard to banish dust and flies, but it is possible to prevent them entirely. See that the turf around the house is sodded and quite up to the borders, and that the walks are well graveled or cemented. Don't make the wretched mistake of using coal cinders and ashes for walks, for they ruin shoes and dresses, track badly when wet, and look dingy and mean anyhow. Cinders can be used for a

layer under gravel or sand, but should never come in sight.

Have a large mat outside the front door, no matter whether of coir, husks, or braided rags, but keep it clean by turning it over and beating with the broom when dry. A wide low scraper so placed that it is easy to use, and a second mat inside the entry door in bad weather, will lead people to make their shoes neat on entering the house. In summer sprinkle the walks and the grass plot to keep the dust down, and you will not be troubled with much in the house.

Before hot weather begins remove all woollen curtains, furniture and carpets that will hold dust. Matting or a dark painted floor with rugs made from bits of carpet are nicer in summer than the most expensive carpets. A pretty cottage I once saw was laid with white matting at twelve cents a yard, with half-yard border of plain dark-red Venetian carpet which cost fifty cents a yard. Any dark old carpet will answer as border, or you can get pretty ingrain borders from seven to twelve inches or half a yard wide at twenty-five to fifty cents a yard. All fashionable summer houses have bare floors of inlaid wood, or

plain oak, maple or chestnut, or stained and polished. A nice new pine floor stained red like cedar and varnished with shellac, is pretty, and any old floor, stained with burnt umber to a walnut color and finished in shellac is handsome enough to go with any furnishings. You can stain and polish a floor seventeen feet square in this way for one dollar and a half, doing the work yourself, which any girl in her teens is equal to. Instead of Japan varnish, always use shellac on floors, for it wears better and never dries sticky. Take a hair brush instead of a broom to sweep such polished floors, or you can wipe them every morning with a damp mop as easily as they can be swept.

If you want a cool house in the torrid days, look to its ventilation. It passes understanding how people can keep their rooms shut up as they do in summer. I dread to go into some houses in the village, for they are certain to have the rooms closed to keep out the flies, with perhaps a two-inch crack of a window left open, and the room smells like the interior of a pyramid with its stale air. To be cool or healthy, the house should have a draft through its

entries from ground to garret; not a gale of wind blowing the curtains about, enough to set everybody sneezing, but a gentle steady change of air. If there isn't a transom to open over the street door, there ought to be, and it should stand open, together with a window or trapdoor at the top of the house, night and day except in storms. Air ascends naturally; give it an opening on the lower floor to come in and one up-stairs to go out, and it will rise, carrying all heat and smells and much dust with it out of the house. Flies will not live in a draft: they are delicate creatures and a strong air offends them. You never see houses like Judge Parsons, with wide windows and folding doors that stand open all season, troubled with flies.

If there is no transom in the outer door, the upper cross panel might be cut out and an openwork piece closing with a slide inserted to give air. Or the shutter door that can be locked and barred at night, leaving the real door wide with the garret window or one in the upper hall open will give a cool current through the halls. If all the inside doors have transoms or openwork ventilators opening into the entry



and their windows down at the top and properly shaded, you will have a cool house the hottest day of August. And such contrivance will give the family refreshing sleep on sultry nights, and the usual scenery be omitted of uneasy ghosts in white drapery wandering to and fro with palm leaf fans in their hands, exchanging laments and trying for a cooler place till daybreak.

You think about having door and window screens of course. The best writers on ventilation do not approve their use whether of wire or mosquito netting, because they do not allow air enough to pass through their meshes to properly supply the rooms. You know how close and warm a room with these screens always appears on coming from the outer air. With the upper window open and a strong current forcing its way through them, wire screens are not objectionable, but if you have a nice green yard between the house and the street, and no mosquitoes to dread, I shouldn't put screening between me and the fresh air merely to keep out flies, for flies can be kept out better in another way. It is much more desirable to have awnings for all the windows on the sunny side

of the house. People imagine these are expensive for general use, and so they are if you employ an awning maker to put them up complete. But when the striped awning stuff is seventeen cents a yard, and any woman with a sewing machine can make it up, and any carpenter can rig frames for them for twenty-five cents a window, no good house can afford to be without them. Awning or no awning, you must keep the sun off the glass if you want a cool house. Let the sunlight into rooms for an hour as early or late as possible, for they need it winter and summer to keep them pure; but shut the blinds before the day grows hot. If there are no blinds, have cotton shades for the outside of the window, or as some housekeepers advise, lower the top sash and draw the roller blind outside to hang over the glass, for it condenses the rays as they pass through, making the room doubly hotter. Even on a winter day, if you sit in the sunshine which falls through a window, the heat soon becomes unbearable, because the glass increases its power. So on warm July days you want the rooms swept and in order and the blinds closed before nine o'clock in the morning. A very comfort-

able fashion I saw in a seaside hotel was to hang curtains of common chintz or shirting at chamber doors so that they might stand wide open and airy, with sufficient privacy most of the time.

Now about flies. I can tell you from experience that it is perfectly unnecessary to have even a dozen flies all summer. The neighbors darken their houses and shut themselves up and half suffocate behind screens for fear of these plagues, but I never do either, and rarely see a fly. They don't like to come and see me, for they never get anything to eat. One law in this household is executed with the fidelity of a dragon, if dragons are faithful as supposed—and that is, to allow no crumbs or smears, and no trace of eatables about the place, outside of the proper rooms and proper hours. Where there is no food there are no flies. You have got to choose between taking strict care to starve them out, or have twice as much trouble with their presence. Yes, I've lived through the usual worry of babies with sticky fingers and children who wanted something to eat between meals, and know what it all means. I don't remember whether I kept a wet sponge to wipe fingers and

doorknobs tied to my apron strings or not, but it was something like it. In the first place there is no need of children running about with smeary fingers, and slices of bread and butter, for they can learn before they speak to eat in proper places, and to have hands washed as soon as they are through. I have seen a baby worry as much because his hands were not washed as his nurse could to see him so. Then sticky doorknobs and shelves must be washed anyhow, and it is just as easy to do it first as last, after they have drawn a feast of flies. A smear of sweets on a doorknob, a fragment trodden into a carpet, a dust of sugar or drop of sauce on a pantry shelf is enough to feed a dozen flies and they are alert to take advantage of it. No food is to be eaten or kept in the china closet, which is the place for dishes and table ware only: all eatables in the pantries are to be kept closely covered in clean plates or jars, all crumbs wiped or swept up as soon as made, and no food or scraps are to stand in the kitchen uncovered when not actually in use. Is it necessary to leave cups of sugar about with flies taking toll, or gravy with two or three swimming in it, or the freshly baked cake

for the whole swarm to parade over, when it is so easy to cover things with saucer or cloth? In the dining-room, as soon as the table is set, it should be covered with the fresh white netting kept for the purpose, and the moment the family rise, let it be replaced till you are ready to clear things away. All food should be set away in icebox or pantry under cover, tablecloth shaken and the crumbs brushed up before the dishes are washed, which should be soaking all the time. Then air the dining-room thoroughly, so that the odor of food may leave it, and let the windows stand open between meals.

Half the heat and worry of cooking and kitchen work may as well be saved as not, even in summer. I used to work very comfortably in our country kitchen, by taking the old-fashioned windows out bodily, leaving the wind to draw through freely and temper the heat of the large stove. The model kitchen will have swing windows, to let all the air in possible, but till people have sense enough to build them, we must manage cooking with as little heat as we can. Plenty of families light the range but twice a week all summer, on washing and ironing days

doing the baking and roasting for the week. The small kerosene stoves with ovens will do all the cooking and ironing, with little heat and expense. And I advise you to set one of these down as an indispensable help. A double stove with three cooking places costs twelve dollars, and will rob summer cooking of its terrors. Three gallons of kerosene at fifteen cents each, will do all the cooking and ironing of a family for a week, and many women use but half as much. There is the comfort of abolishing all dust and trouble of making fires, or waiting for the stove to heat, and the moment the last dish is lifted from the stove, the fire is out and all is cool in five minutes. As for washing, that can be done in summer without any fire at all. New soaps are made which cleanse clothes and whiten them thoroughly without the aid of hot water. I have used them for over ten years, and have whiter, sweeter clothes than the washerwomen with all their scalding and perspiring. Any good chemical washing soap will cleanse things beautifully without hot water, if they are soaked in sunwarmed suds, and bleached for an hour in the hot sun before rinsing. Leave the water in tubs to

warm in the sun, the day before, and put the clothes to soak at night with plenty of soap, using both more soap and more water than is usual. Wring them out of this and put them through the machine in tepid water, rubbing all soiled places lightly with soap, and laying them wet on the grass in the sun. As soon as dry, have them rinsed and hung out. No matter if they are a little yellowish, the sun will whiten them for you. This mode is practised in England among the cottagers, some of whom are the neatest women in the world. And Southern housekeepers tell me it is the way washing is done in the Gulf States. When you have the strong sun to do the work, with chemistry stronger than any soda or bleaching powders in the world, what is the use of heating the house and making it horrible every Monday with slops and steams and smells unmentionable? You will find no stains or grime able to resist sunshine. If they do not disappear at first drying, dip them into clean weak suds or even clear water, and bleach again, wetting them several times as they dry. On a rainy Monday, which set half the housekeepers in town fretting, I have seen people take the clothes

from the soaking tub and lay them on the grass for the rain to wash, and when it was over rinse and hang them up, clean and dazzling white as no laundry could make them. It was using sense and information together. If you can have sun and rain do your work for you, why waste your own strength and time over it?

If the ice gives out and you want to cool butter, wrap the roll in linen in a clean unglazed earthen flowerpot, and tie the whole in thicknesses of old flannel or blankets, wet them thoroughly, and set in the shade, in the wind, in a shallow pan of water. The evaporation from the wet flannel and porous clay will cool the contents remarkably. All water for drinking or cooking should be filtered, for pure water is growing rarer and rarer with the wasting of the brooks, and bad drainage of streams and wells. Filtered water in large jars of stone ware kept wet in an airy place will be refreshingly cool without ice. The Mexicans and Spanish settlers in the Southwest, cool their drinking water in such jars as their fathers on the Continent did before them, and our people in New Mexico and Arizona are learning to prize the



great vases and ollas as much as Yankee bean pots. Flowers and boughs assist in keeping the house comfortable as well as delightful, for the flowers drive flies away by their perfumes, and large jars of green fern, alder, branches of willow or any thick-leaved tree kept in water will cool a room by the moisture they give out. The English peasantry know this, though they cannot tell the philosophy of it, and in old times the custom was to set tubs and pails of water full of green boughs about the stone floored cottages for coolness. The water should be changed every day, and have a little borax or charcoal to keep it sweet. I think you will like this excuse for keeping your rooms full of fresh green things and fragrant flowers, the only things of which we cannot have too much. The less furniture in summer rooms the better, as leaving them more spacious and airy. With a trim house which every sweet air can wander through at will, its leisurely spaces, its freshness of sprinkled leaves and flowers, its softly lowered lights making rooms and chambers pleasant, kitchen troubles reduced to their least heat and effort, with light nourishing food of soups and stews, vegetables

cooked with gravies, giving us the essence of meats without bulk, fruits, berry-cakes, puddings and deep plain pies, salads and velvet creams, we find that great heats can be borne tranquilly without loss of comfort or strength.

## XI. — BLUE MONDAYS.

A POOR housekeeper always dreads Monday," a wise woman once said in my young ears when I thought Mrs. Barbauld might as well have written

Never yet did housewife

Greet with a smile the *weekly* washing day.

Sunday evening would close serene and full of lovely thoughts, while Monday opened on scenes of slop and steam, soiled clothes strewn over the floor, a sink full of unwashed dishes, an unkempt house, and a mistress with hair and temper awry. This is the kind of penance some women go through every week of their lives, and never improve in fifty years' experience.

Not every woman needs to do her own washing, even in plain families, but every one should know how to order things that washing days will not make the whole house uncomfortable, and be a martyrdom

to the worker. It is best to know how to take a hand at the washing yourself, for laundresses are not found in every part of the country, and many an army officer's wife, many a home missionary's wife, and the daughters of well-to-do families in country towns, find themselves obliged either to wash their own clothes or go without clean ones. Lady Hester Stanhope when a girl in the proudest family in England, used to remember her aunt, the Countess Dowager, going about the wash-rooms and bleaching grounds, peering into tubs and "coppers,"—as the English call boilers—berating the maids and occasionally plying her rattan across their shoulders if the linen was not white enough to suit her ladyship's ideas. Miss Martineau and Mrs. Somerville used not only to wash linen and laces, but to dye and "do over" gowns and pelerines in right notable fashion, and George Sand who was a woman of much force of character as well as genius, often recalled how in the days when she was making her literary reputation in Paris she did her own washing—and did it beautifully too. I never knew a woman of really fine spirit and breeding who could not without hesitation accept

whatever duty was needful, whether tending a sick person, doing field or housework, or looking into details of business.

The loveliest, most refined women have always in reserve a fibre of steel to meet the inevitable without affectation or complaint. I've seen a high-bred Englishwoman with accomplishments at her fingers' ends, work at the wash tub as composedly and gleefully as if born a laundry-maid, while the young women of no particular family or bringing up are the ones who cannot go to market without a maid to carry the basket, cannot carry a parcel and always speak of washing and "domestic duties" as things of a lower order, quite out of their comprehension. I do not mean that one is to do rough work unnecessarily, but that you should learn a spirit which asks only, "Is this necessary, is it best?" and thereupon make duty acceptable and becoming. Half the rough work in the world — I will speak the truth and say most of the work in it, is rough only in the manner of doing it. Not to be in heroics over common indispensable work, which belongs to our cheeriness and comfort, along with white curtains

and ruffled skirts, snowy kerchiefs and collars, and soft white body linen, I would have you feel yourself so much of a lady, so thoroughly in love with what is fine and becoming, that you are safe in doing whatever is convenient for you, whether it is digging the borders and filling flower-pots, or putting the week's washing through the alchemy of white foam, to come out snowy and odorous of freshness.

The beginning of washing as it should be, is taking care of the soiled clothes through the week. They must not be tossed in all sorts of corners to gather more soil to vex the washerwoman and wear them out, neither must the clothing full of perspiration from the body, be packed in a bag or basket to saturate the heap with smells. You know that clothing absorbs the secretions from the body, and if at all warm and damp, these change into unwholesome poisonous matters. Ill-smelling clothes are not good for one to work over, or breathe steam from the suds in washing them. When you change clothes, put the soiled ones in the sun to air thoroughly an hour before putting away. You may have a clothes bag of gay calico lined and bound with red alpaca

braid, a double bag with stout partition in the middle and a large opening each side, for you want to keep fine things slightly soiled apart from those that see hard usage. Such a bag should hang in the up-stairs entry to receive soiled things from the bed-rooms, and be emptied daily into the big basket in the airy back-kitchen, shed or porch, never anywhere in a close closet or cellar-way to taint the air around. Have a separate bag for tablecloths and napkins. Dish-towels and cloths are to be washed and rinsed daily, dried and kept separately from everything else.

Be good to yourself by making and keeping one hard and fast rule: always to do the washing Mondays. There is reason for this; because you never will feel so strong and fresh for the hardest work of the week as after Sunday's rest. Remember rules are favors for the makers and rods for the breakers, when you grumble at having to do things when you don't feel like them. The penalty usually is having them to do when you feel still less inclined and less able, in a vexatious hurry.

No matter if the girls are going in town shopping by the Monday train and want you to join them, or if

the committee of the Bluebell Coterie want you to go around to solicit subscriptions for the momentous matter of their society badges, or if you feel just like reading the new poems all the forenoon and writing letters in the afternoon—to tell what you think about them. Let these weighty interests go by—for Tuesday morning you will feel just as strongly inclined to go after flowers with the May party, or to work at your sofa cushion, or to call on the neighbor who was hurt last week, and by Friday, the housework will roll up in a crushing shape, when you have neither strength nor spirits to meet it.

Promise yourself to begin that you will never allow the washing day to be dreadful to you or the house, and that its disagreeables shall be met and conquered, as they may be by the aid of common sense and intelligence. Now you want to put your wages into a new sort of a servant, one that will do the work, and neither waste, steal or tattle, and whose keep costs nothing. You can afford to have all the modern helps for washing, a *good* washer, of the rocking patent, or still better, one of the steam boilers and a rocking washer beside. If you can have a small



laundry next the kitchen, by all means persuade your father to fit up one, with a boiler set in the brickwork to save fire and avoid heating the house in summer. "Set tubs," as servants call them, are very convenient for lazy people, but are not kept clean as easily as movable round tubs, which are better every way. And where a regular laundry is impossible, a small, extra stove for the boiler, round tubs with wooden spigots to let the water out and hose to lead it into a large barrel or cesspool furnish every help at small expense. Aunt Hester will tell you that a stove can be picked up at auction for three to five dollars which will answer all purposes. The steam washer costs three dollars and fifty cents, and the rocker from five to ten dollars as you may get it new or second-hand. If the latter, it will need to be cleansed inside and out with a broom and hot lye, to clear away the grease and settleings careless people leave in machines, which smirch clothes where you least expect it. The laundry must never be a rubbish hole, but be kept clean and free of dust, so that you will not have any more soil to wash out than belongs to the clothes. It is well to have two

wringers, one of large size for sheets and counterpanes, so as not to strain the smaller for common articles. A large closet should be made to keep all the washing utensils clean and out of sight. You want plenty of clothes lines; one to hang out all the time for drying and airing things every day, and two for the washing, to be taken in when the clothes are dry, and kept in a clean bag. Common hemp line is cheap enough so that you can keep a fifteen-cent one out rain or shine, but you must keep lines and clothes-pins clean, or you will be vexed with soiled spots on the fresh linen which won't wash out easily. Don't use galvanized wire lines; they wear the clothes, and in winter freeze to them so that they are easily torn. Clean props and galvanized hooks for the line are necessary, and above all, a well-kept grass-plot for the drying-ground where no dust, no hens or weeds can mar your clean washings, with a shady corner for calicoes, that the sun may not fade them.

What else! *No* soda nor washing powder, javelle water nor bleaching fluid which whiten clothes beautifully but ruin them in a short time. Some powders

and fluids are safe, but none are better or cheaper than borax which we know is good for hands as well as clothes. A pound of borax in a wide-mouthed bottle tightly corked is enough to last three months, and costs ten cents. An ounce of oxalic acid in a bottle with glass stopper will last a long time for taking out iron rust, and you want a pound of chloride of lime for bleaching desperate spots, or for disinfecting purposes. Bluing in little balls is better than the liquid in bottles. Beside these, keep one or two articles in your washing-closet not usually found there, but very useful — a peck of clean wheat bran for washing nice prints and lawns, and a truss of hay to restore color to brown linens. A small jar of rock salt is convenient to dissolve in the rinsing water to *set* the color of new prints. Keep these things ready, for it is troublesome hunting them up just as you need them.

Put the clothes in soak in tepid water, making a good lather to begin, and rubbing plenty of soap on the bindings, cuffs, and soiled places. Hot water sets the soil, tepid or cold loosens it, and soap combines with the animal oils and perspiration, which it

neutralizes and takes out. It does not make much difference whether clothes are soaked all night or half an hour, provided plenty of water and soap are used. When ready to wash, the first thing is to wring the clothes from the soaking water into a tub of clean warm suds, where they are rubbed. This may be done with the washing machine which turns out house linen nicely without other rubbing. Body clothing will need careful rubbing by hand on a washboard on all places where the wear comes. This is best done on a Magic washboard, which has slats an inch square that turn as one rubs, giving the clothes four times the rubbing on their blunt corners, they get from a common board. If you can't afford a machine, by all means have a Magic washboard, which is one of the few inventions that are really helps; it cleanses clothes very easily, does *not* wear them out, only costs fifty cents, and is better than most washing machines. I had one once, but don't know where the kind is made or sold. Let me tell you one thing about rubbing clothes; to fold as many thicknesses as you can handle between the soiled place and the board, if you want to wash easily

and well. If you take up a fold or two and rub hard on the spot, it does very little good, for the fingers take the rubbing, not the cloth. To cleanse neck bindings, cuffs, or soiled stockings, use a dull steel knife or a wooden one to scrape them, laying them on a smooth board in the tub with many folds under the soiled parts, and dipping them in the water often. This is an easy way to get out the grime from cotton stockings that have been drabbled.

But these hints are for you only if you can't have that best gift to housekeepers, a steam-washer. I can never get over wondering at the simplicity and effectiveness of this little contrivance of galvanized iron tubes which sets the jet of boiling suds playing through and through the boiler of clothes till every spot and stain is discharged without the aid of hands. With the steam-washer you do not soak the clothes, but soap every soiled part *dry* and plunge them into the boiling water to steam half an hour. By all rules this ought to set the stains, but this is the exception which proves the rule beyond our common knowledge. Chemistry tells us, and experience shows, that heated steam, and soap boiling through clothes

half an hour is too much for mortal soil. Things come out clean, but rather sad looking; they need a "sudsing" in clear water to wash away the grimy boiling fluid; then the rinsing in plenty of fair water, shaking and bluing, and you hang out clothes of old-fashioned whiteness which soar between you and the blue sky on the line, till the verses come into mind about the linen fair and white which is the righteousness of saints. If washing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well; not with ruinous alkalies, but with safe ministers which bring out our clothes the symbol of purity.

There is nothing vulgar about washing — that is, there should not be, need not be. Take time to sweep your kitchen first, and have the dishes neatly piled in the sink to soak till convenient to wash them, set chairs in place, brush the stove clean, and pray don't have stove covers straying about the floor — for nothing makes the kitchen more forlorn — but pile them in the oven out of the way. Have your wash-bench scoured white, the tubs and baskets in good trim; don't allow soiled frocks and flannels to illustrate the floor while they wait their turn, and

keep the doors closed between the kitchen and other parts of the house. With this care, and a stove ventilator, you may wash every day of the week and no one in the house be the wiser.

I won't tell you any farther about washing ; you may find the rest in Mrs. Cornelius' Housekeeper's Friend, and learn by asking every washerwoman you meet. For clever as you may be, to the day of your death it will surprise you that you can't find an old horny-handed laundress or char-woman who won't tell you something helpful you did not know before.

Clothing from the sick or towels soiled by ever so slight illness should be put immediately into warm water when taken from the person, all unpleasant substance removed after soaking an hour, with a very dull knife kept for such uses, and then put in lukewarm soapsuds till it can be properly washed. Never leave such things to dry and make the air offensive. If the disease is contagious, put the cloth into water which has a tablespoonful of carbolic acid to the pailful, and add a heaping dessert spoonful of chloride of lime to the boilerful of water when the things are boiled. Garments and bedding from per-

sons sick of diphtheria, measles, scarlet fever or any contagion should never lie about a house, or be washed with the family washing, as they are likely to give the whole house the same disease.

And lastly, Anna Maria, don't stint your people in clean clothes and towels "to save washing." I vowed from the time I was a girl the phrase should never be heard in my house, but everybody should have all the clean towels and pillow-cases, napkins and handkerchiefs they wanted, if I had to sit up nights and wash them. With a Robbins steam washer a Doty rocker and wringer, you will find it easy to keep the family in the very luxury of white linen, snowy toilet-covers, ruffled pillow-cases, and unsullied skirts, clean napkins every day and dainty tablecloths, so that your brothers will never have occasion to wish that things might be as nice at home as they are at the restaurant or the club. I've seen too many slender women get their big washings out of the way by ten o'clock Monday morning, with the aid of a good machine, and sit down smiling and untired, to have any dread of the process on which the honor and health of the house-



hold depend. Pray is the labor ignoble which furnishes the glistening sheets and spreads for the guest chamber, the snowy curtains for the bedroom windows, the crisp tucks and ruffles, the trim, spotless stockings and fresh collars and linen for everybody? Then see that you make it respected by your cleverness and tact in doing it.

## XII.—STARCHING AND IRONING.

I HOPE, Anna Maria, that you follow the old fashion of starching bed and table linen slightly, for things look better, iron easier, and keep fresh longer for it. Pillow cases and sheets feel cooler and more grateful for the finish starch gives them, and absorb less from the body. Nor need there be the waste of starch which half-taught servants find necessary. I never found one who had any rule for the amount used, whether there were a dozen shirts and sheets or only three; they guessed at the starch wanted, and some girls took pride in saying they used a pound every week with the washing. Clothes are better for just enough starch to give finish, not stiffness, and more than this injures the fabric. Of course shirts and collars are the exception, which need to be stiff to hold their shape.

Most of the starching is done when the clothes

are rinsed. Shirts and fine linen or muslins require gloss starch, which comes in packages—common box starch answers for everything else; or if that makes too much an item of expense, flour starch, well made with bluing, will do for cottons and colored things. Make starch when the fine clothes are nearly done scalding; have a very clean bright saucepan to boil it in, for the least grease or rust will affect it, and stain the clothes. For each shirt, collar, and pair of cuffs, together, allow a teaspoonful of dry starch. Have your teakettle of water boiling fast; moisten the starch with one tablespoonful of *cold* water for each teaspoonful of starch; dissolve the lumps, then pour on the boiling water gradually, stirring fast in the saucepan on the stove, till all lumps and milky whiteness disappear, and the whole boils clear. Strain through a very clean coarse cloth into a large dish, and cover to cool. When collars and cuffs are rinsed drop them into the starch, and rub them in it as if you were washing them, so that it will be well rubbed into the fabric; wring them with your hands, or wipe the jellied starch from the surface and dry quickly. You must not hang out shirts and linen just starched on a

breezy day, for, as the laundry maids say, the wind blows all the starch out of them ; neither should you put them out in a fog or damp weather and expect to find them stiff when dry. Better dry things just as they are rinsed, and starch them the next day it is fine.

There will be starch left, but not enough for the rest of the washing. For muslins, add twice as much hot water, and boil over again a moment. Dip muslins or laces into the starch when cool enough, press, or clap gently between the palms, and shake the moisture from each article without wringing, which frays the delicate substance. Fine things look much clearer for being waved till dry, or drying in a breeze, and taken in the moment when dry. Now for the common washing allow a dessert spoonful of plain starch to each sheet and pair of pillow cases, and to each tablecloth. Make the starch as before, in larger quantity, and add it, a quart at a time, boiling hot to the bluing water. Don't put it all into the rinse at once, as some folks do, for then the first things rinsed will have most of the starch, and the last very little ; but wring out a few pieces and put in fresh starch for

the rest. Have it hot, because it is thin and mixes better so. Bring your clothes in quickly if it is a windy day, before they are dry, and finish them in the house, if you want any effect from the starch. Don't hang starched things where they will freeze. In winter dry your shirts without starch and finish operations in the house. Never let marseilles quilts freeze, for the forcible shrinkage injures the figure and splits the material. Old washerwomen tell me never to let clothes hang out when snowing, for "snow grays things," which may be from the ammonia in the flakes.

Boil brown or unbleached linens in water with a handful of hay in the boiler, to keep or restore their shade. For prints, especially the pretty, expensive percales which lose all beauty in ordinary washing, there is only one way of treatment. Tie a quart of bran loosely in a sleazy cotton bag, and boil it with three or four pails of water. When cool, take half to wash the dress in, using a very little fine soap on greasy places; don't let the garment soak a moment, but wash quickly, and rinse at once in the rest of the bran water, then in a pailful of lukewarm water, and dry in

the shade on a clear breezy day, take in when damp, and iron at once. The bran cleanses the cotton and acts as starch besides. Any colors that bear washing at all, may be cleansed in this way. You should take a separate day for doing up nice prints, when the weather is just right, and you can iron them immediately. This is the French method of washing fine lawns and cambrics of delicate colors, and the Bon Marché, at Paris, that great establishment where you find everything a woman is likely to want for herself or her house, sells thousands of little bags of bran and oatmeal, for baths, and for doing up dresses. Common prints would look a great deal better than usual, if washed at once, one piece at a time, and never allowed to soak, but hurried through the starch and on the line before another was put in the water. The exception is with new black, or black and white prints, which should soak ten minutes the first time they are washed, in strong salt water, a pound of coarse salt to a pailful of cold water.

In old times ironing was one of the fine domestic arts, like making cake and taking care of china. There is a pretty picture in some quaint correspond-

ence of the last century, where a lady describes how she and her young friends met to iron their laces and linens at each other's houses, and how Lord Harry This and Sir Charles That, in their scarlet coats laced with gold, and their flowing shirt ruffles, lounged beside the ironing tables with jest and compliment while pretty Mistress Betty and Lady Susan, in muslin caps and kerchiefs, and flowered chintz gowns tucked up over quilted red petticoats, ironed kerchiefs, caps, and aprons, and crimped shirt ruffles till tea. In those days only the ladies of the family, or the head lady's maid, could be trusted to do up the fine muslin articles which made so much a part of a woman's toilet, and to this day it remains an accomplishment to iron well. It is ladylike work, for ironing requires strict neatness of all surroundings and deftness of hand. For all the increase of laundries till there is one in every new town, one can seldom be sure of having things washed, much less ironed as they should be. Collars and cuffs come home with the streaks of last week's wear ironed under the polish; nice ruffled gingham are rough about the gathers, and show dull patches where the

material was allowed to dry before ironing; plain underwear, napkins and pillow cases are so hastily done that one is uncertain whether they were touched at all.

I tell you, Anna Maria, all the little niceties, the finish of housekeeping, pay: the carefully dusted corners, the fresh napkins every day, the smooth glossy linen, the pillow-cases that wear the press of the iron in every thread and seam. Men feel the soothing, refining effect of this far-reaching care and order, even if they are heedless enough to destroy it in an hour; boys feel it, children *love* it, and crave it. When Bennie was a little boy four years old, he used to insist on having the sheet turned down and the pillows spread smooth as hands could lay them, and then crawl in carefully, not to disturb the snowy smoothness, and lie luxuriating in the order and whiteness of his bed. The big boys have come home evenings and gone into their neat rooms, with the beds made up with fresh linen, the second time in a week, and the chuckle of content which escaped them, overheard in the entry, was enough to pay for all the trouble. It has been worth all care and pains



to have them write, "There is something about home I miss everywhere. It seems as if things were cleaner there than anywhere else. I have lain awake Sunday mornings with my eyes shut, so I couldn't see the dust on the mouldings in my boarding-house, or the dingy curtains or the half-ironed towels they brought me, and have thought of home, with the white back stairs, where the clean carpet and the sheets, towels and tablecloths always seemed so fresh. I never knew what neat housekeeping was worth before. It's the one thing that makes a home."

Half the success of ironing comes from having the things in the right state to iron; neither too damp nor too dry. Sprinkling and folding them just before you iron won't answer. The moisture must have time to be absorbed evenly through the fabric. Sprinkle and fold clothes over night for Tuesday's ironing. The old rule is to "sprinkle fine," that is, in fine drops; but I hope you have one of the twenty-five-cent sprinklers, which does the work to admiration in half the usual time. Have an empty basket to hold things as they are folded, the large

table clear and the kitchen in its best order. Clean clothes are certain to take a smirch if there is grime or dust in reach. Sort the towels, pillow-cases, napkins, handkerchiefs, aprons, all together. Beginning with the cases, sprinkle each, taking care that hems and corners are not left dry; spread each case lengthwise, lay half a dozen in a pile, smoothing out the wrinkles with your hand, and roll together tightly as possible. The pressure takes out the wrinkles and leaves less for the iron to do. Follow with towels laid together and rolled up the same way. It is better than folding each piece singly, for they do not dry so soon. Dust your basket well with a whisk, lay a large clean cloth in it, and put the folded clothes in, sheets and large things lowest, small things on the top, and cover close with another cloth. Colored things should not be sprinkled till an hour before ironing, and should not be laid with white clothes at all, as the colors may run with dampness.

To iron with comfort, you want a clean kitchen or laundry, good light, a neat stove, and hot irons. Have the table close to the heater, so that you need

not walk back and forth for fresh irons; and it is a great convenience to have a swivel chair without arms, in which you can sit and iron part of the time. In hot weather, the best way is to first heat your irons on the common stove after breakfast, let the fire go out, and keep them hot with the kerosene heater. It is hard to heat cold irons by the kerosene stove, but, once heated, it will keep them piping hot a whole afternoon with one third of a gallon of oil. The heater can be on a stand — an old sewing-machine table, say — close to the ironing-table, and you will find it hastens work wonderfully to have plenty of hot irons in reach of your hand. You will need, on the table, a clean blanket and sheet to iron on, wipers and clean linen-covered holders which are cooler than woollen, a bowl of clean water and cloth to dampen spots.

Six irons are needed, of which two should weigh from eight to ten pounds, for sheets and table-cloth, two of six pounds, and two light ones having sharp points for ironing gathers. A pair of polishing irons for shirts are considered indispensable nowadays, and you can grind off the tips of middle-sized

irons on your grindstone to make them. You must keep all your irons well polished, and nothing is more convenient for this than a block of sandstone, or part of a broken grindstone. Failing these, strew sand on a board and rub the irons over it. Then rub when warm with beeswax, wiping very carefully. See that your irons are in good condition before you begin, and that the heater is clean, and the fire well replenished. A tin cover for the irons while heating will quicken the process, and save the heat. See that no window or door opens a draft on the irons or the table. You will find your irons cooling vexatiously fast in a current of air. To work well or fast, your irons must be as hot as possible without scorching. Use them, if a little scorching, on rough towels or tablecloths, moving very quickly.

To iron a pillow-case, take it by the seam corners and shake out; lay it with the seam next you, and iron one side smoothly, first along the seams, then across; fold lengthwise and iron the other sides; fold once more along the middle, iron the fold smooth, and fold *across* the middle, pressing the folds with a heavy iron to have them sharp and

nice, then hang on the clothes-frame, which should be dusted with a damp cloth, and have a clean white cloth to cover things.

When you iron a wrinkle into anything, wring the cloth in the bowl of water, dampen the place, and iron again. If a corner of a hem gets dry dampen that before ironing, in the same way, and you will have no faults in your work. Handkerchiefs and napkins you will iron all around the hem first, then across, always ironing the same way the threads of the weaving run, not cornerwise, or the article will be askew. Fold them squarely, and let a heavy iron stand on them a moment.

But all the heavy ironing should be done by an invention I hope to see in every kitchen as commonly as a stove—the family mangle. This is a pair of polished wooden rollers, working with cogs, like a clothes wringer, and sheets, tablecloths, towels, all articles without gathers, folded and put through, come out smoothed by pressure, without the heat and fuss of ironing. Most English houses have the bed and table linen mangled, the hems of sheets and pillow cases being finished with irons, and the gloss put

on the damask by a second ironing. A small mangle costs ten dollars and would save its price in a year in fuel, to say nothing of the comfort of ironing without fire in hot weather. Another convenience is a stout clamp or brace to hold the end of the skirt board steady while ironing, instead of resting it on a chair, which is uncertain support.

I have not told you how to iron a shirt or collar, because it would take an article by itself to do that. Neither patent polish or polishing irons, bosom boards or pleat knives will ever teach you how to iron a shirt nicely, unless you take care of twenty points in the work beside. Yet you can do it. I have known girls of ten and twelve years old who could iron shirts or collars neatly, and have sat beside the ironing board while an accomplished lady, a French and Latin scholar, turned off six shirts, faultlessly ironed and polished in half an hour with the certainty of machine work, every stroke telling, and, to the best of my recollection, she used neither polishing iron or prepared starch. Learn the rest first; to iron every gather in skirt, flounce or sleeve, to turn out ruffles like flower petals for smoothness, to iron bias

bands, damping and ironing over the wrinkles till they fade out; to press clear folds with the heavy irons; to iron puffs with the little French egg-iron, or to fold in the middle, iron like a ruffle, and then erase the fold by damping it and running the tip of your sharp flat iron along its length; to iron strings of all kinds as if they were ribbons, and to do plain underclothes with the same preciseness you would the richest show embroideries.

I have not told you of any polishes to put in starch, for I have seen as fine work done without them as with them. Polishing is not a matter of butter or salt or gum arabic or spermaceti in the starch, though people use such things. The gum makes linen hold stiffness better; it does not make it glossier than starch properly used, and *well-boiled*. I will give you a few hints, however, for practice. If linen blisters in ironing it is because starch was not well rubbed into the fabric. Touch the place with thick starch and iron over again. If starch cakes and sticks—either it was ill made, too much starch used for the water, ill-boiled or lumpy, or the iron is not warm enough, or is rusty and wants polishing and

waxing, or you have used raw starch and not rubbed it well into the linen. If black specks appear on the surface, dampen and scrape them off with a knife, touch with starch and iron again, first laying a thin cloth over it for the first stroke or two. Iron always the long way of the threads in starched things ; first iron straight into shape and dry, no matter how dull, then dampen with a cloth, go over with a hot iron, dampen and iron two or three times till the wrinkles disappear, and you will find out how polishing is done.



### XIII. — OVER THE MENDING-BASKET.

**Y**OU *have* the serious business of life laid out before you in that big basket of things torn and worn, haven't you, Anna Maria? Just ask me to take off my bonnet and wrap, won't you, and hint that you could endure to have me stay the afternoon? I never did think much of the flimsy etiquette which obliges you to sit with idle hands whenever a neighbor comes in to chat comfortably with you, and loses twenty minutes hearing how the children on the West Side are with diphtheria, and how Mr. Briggs' barn was burned at the Centre last night, and Clarinda Wells is to sing at the concert next week, with various engrossing news of the sort, which you could hear and enjoy just as well while knitting or sewing the ruffle on your apron while you listened. The German ladies don't drop work for every caller. English ladies of rank do not feel that they show one disre-

spect if they keep on with their lace work or stitching of any sort. You may have heard of the countess who was so fond of plain sewing that she spent her leisure at it, and gave away dozens of linen shirts made in the finest manner, among her friends. I'm not that countess, but I never see a shabby, unmended thing that I don't ache to get hold of it, and make it presentable, and the thought has crossed my mind whether in small society like ours, intimate friends couldn't be of use in meeting round to do up each other's mending and making over, as well as in sewing for the poor. We might sew for the poor and for our friends too, and give sickly Mrs. Dawson a chance to get out on fine days without being haunted with that heaped-up mending-basket, and the boys' trousers that need darning at the knees, and we might let Miss Carington, the school teacher, rest her eyes evenings after correcting a dozen exercises, instead of doing all her own sewing, so that she can send more money home. That would be doing good as we have opportunity, to some purpose.

Well, now, before we begin, have you good needles, long and short? Is the sewing machine in

order? Are your scissors and shears sharp? for you can't do neat mending unless they are. Have you smooth strong linen thread that works easily, silk and twist, and strong sewing cotton, and binding tape; not the glazed sort, but fine, twilled tape, both narrow and wide, with buttons of pearl, linen, agate, horn and metal? You had better spend a dollar at once for such things. You can get a year's supply of all these "findings" of the best quality, tapes, needles, buttons and threads, from the city, for a dollar, and it saves hours of time and wear of clothes to have them ready. Get them, and keep in a locked drawer of your work-stand where the children cannot get at them, to mix and tangle things. Keep stout needles threaded with black linen and white cotton, coarse and fine, and black silk, on a hanging cushion where any one can seize them to sew on a loose boot button, or baste a ruffle, or tighten a coat button in a hurry. The time and the temper I've saved since I learned to keep my needles threaded and handy!

That reminds me, Nellie pet, your boot buttons are loose. Jump up in my lap and let your next friend sew them on. Not that black cotton, if you please, nor

the sewing silk that frays, nor the fine linen thread either. Give me that stout hank, and a number four needle, and the wax. And, pet, we'll double the thread and knot one end of it only, so there will be no clumsy knot to mark your soft foot, and we take just three stitches apiece to each button, fasten thread with a stitch in the lining of the boot, without cutting it, and go on to the next, till they're all done; and if one of those buttons comes off till the boot wears out, tell me, and I'll come and sew it on again. I think you observed that you hated nothing worse than sewing on boot buttons, Anna Maria — the pulling to get the needle through, and thread fraying, is a great trial of patience. So it is, and I think too much of my patience to give it unnecessary trials. If you have good linen thread and wax it well at first and after sewing on each button, and have a needle just right to carry it, it won't fray or break; using double thread, three stitches do the work of six single; and if you fasten thread between the buttons without cutting till all are sewed, you will find it hold till the shoe is old. There is something in knowing just how to sew on even a boot button.

Now you are not going to waste hours of precious existence in darning those gaping heels of socks! You will cut out the heel entirely, take up the stitches and knit a new one double in an evening. Or you will hire it done by the girls of the Industrial Home, or by old Mrs. Cutter, who earns her missionary money and her liniment by odd jobs at home. If you can't do this, get soft buckskin, and sew heels of that in Joe's socks, as I have seen good housekeepers do. The next socks he has; I advise you to get a pair of stocking savers, of fine leather, like the lining of ladies' boots, to slip over the heel, for they do away with a great deal of mending. It is well to buy socks and stockings that are a size larger than one needs, to allow for shrinking, which makes them wear out. Our merchants are just beginning to sell children's stockings with double-knit heels and toes. The whole sole of hose ought to be double to resist wear, but at least you can line the boys' pairs. Those scarlet cashmere stockings have the feet well worn out, and the color is faded beside, with Katy's method of washing, which leaves all the fine flannels and stockings to soak in strong suds, while she rinses the others, instead of

whisking each stocking through its wash and up to dry before the dye can start. But the legs of the pair are firm and good, so if you want fine wool hose that will outwear three pair of woven ones, do you get white Saxony yarn, knit feet to the old cashmere tops, and have them dyed the popular dark red. In this way you get stockings handsome and durable, and the old tops will outwear two pairs of knitted feet yet. Nellie's stockings have broken out in small holes in the heel. Nellie, child, bring me the tack hammer so that I can drive the steel peg into the heel of your little shoe that makes these wicked holes. Looking after the shoe-pegs and welts often prevents damage to stockings.

The high wind tore the sheets this week on the line, and there is no use in sewing up the rent. The only way to get farther wear from them is to turn them. Rip the hems two inches at each end, overcast the selvages of the sheet together, tear it down the middle and hem the edges. You have a neat, new sheet, that will wear six months or a year longer. The corners of the hems are fringing out in the best sheets and tablecloths, because the careless maker

did not know she ought to put twice as many stitches there as in the rest of her work, and fasten by sewing the ends over and over. I take it for granted you are too good a housekeeper to hem napkins or towels or sew seams in sheets with the machine, as slack women do. You can't make a machine hem look well on damask or toweling, the work draws, and looks mean, while as for sheets, I wouldn't be buried in one with a machine seam! A machine hem for sheets is another thing. Those tablecloths can only be made neat by paring the corners round, and hemming them again. There is a thin place in the damask. Give me some ravelings of coarse linen and we will have it darned in a few minutes. Here is another cloth quite worn out in the centre while the ends are good. Cut off two ends the full width of the linen and three quarters of a yard deep; hem these for carving napkins, to lay under the roast and soup at either end of the table above a clean cloth, to save it from spots. The smaller side pieces of your old cloth will do for bread or lunch cloths, to put over a small table. Or, you can cut out the weak part in the middle of your old cloth,

and insert a square of half-worn damask from the corner of one in like case, joining the two by her-ring-bone or open-stitch. A little knowledge of fancy work is the saving of many a half-worn article nowadays. Keep all the old napkins and handkerchiefs — *all* the old linen you have. You want napkins to wrap cake in, to strain things through, and when past every other use, they are invaluable for hospital lint and *charpie* — which is a coarse lint. We who remember the war and the Sanitary Commission, know how priceless every scrap of old linen in the country was for the hospitals, and such times may come again. If not war, there may be accident, when there will be little time or heart to hunt up necessary things, so keep your old linens and soft worn cotton ready; have them washed, boiled and bleached on the grass, to be pure of all stains, iron them on both sides, to make them soft as possible to raw, shrinking wounds, cut out all seams, hems and bindings, roll them together and keep where you can find them at a moment's notice, with the court plaster and salve, in the medicine closet. Here are old chemises and nightgowns, in good shape yet, but



too worn to last through a month's washings. Lay them by, ironed without starch, for sickness, when poultices and liniments would ruin better ones. Here is a nightgown with binding and ruffle worn out; choose thinner, finer cotton, rebind, and whip new embroidery on the neck and wrists. Good gowns will always wear out two sets of ruffles. The children's nightgowns are too short, but quite large enough round the shoulders, and not half-worn. You may put on a deep ruffle to lengthen them, or cut the skirt straight across by a thread, and piece them down by a machine seam, overcast, not felled, goring and hemming the new part to suit the rest. Don't patch that torn sleeve, cut off the weak part and add a new half-sleeve. This chemise band is torn through; if you sew it up, it will break out next time it is worn the same way; cut the torn edges, rip the band an inch or two, and spread the gathers, then add an inch and a half of new cotton, facing well to the ends of the band; embroider the bit to match the rest, or work a few scallops in crochet to suit, and the garment is good for another season. Half a dozen buttonholes broken away; that comes of mak-

ing them too near the end of the binding. Rip off the torn corner, piece the binding an inch longer than the old one, and work a new buttonhole at least three eighths of an inch from the end. That sort of buttonhole will outlast the clothing it is made on, and Joe can't tear it out, by trying.

Here is a set of merino underwear, shrunk too much to be comfortable, you say. Cut the vest straight down the front from the button flap, add a wide facing of twilled cotton on each side, if the chest needs widening, and make buttons and buttonholes all the way. Cut the binding off the drawers and cut two or three inches from the lower part of the shirt, sew the two garments together by overseaming the raw edges closely, and facing the seam with soft tape. You have a combination suit as convenient and comfortable as those you pay eight dollars for. This all-wool vest is wearing thin under the arms ; run it, like the heel of a stocking, with white zephyr wool, and it will wear six weeks longer. Children are always plagued to get in and out of their clinging merino under shirts ; cut them open all the way down, and add wide facings to button from top to hem. Your

father's under-shirt is wearing thin on the shoulders ; take the skirt of an old one, not too worn, and face back and shoulders, catstitching the facing down and new binding the two at the neck. The sleeves are quite ragged ; replace them with a new flannel pair, with knit cuffs at the wrist. It's some trouble, but it all saves buying twenty dollars' worth of new underwear this season, and gives you the money to spend in pleasanter ways.

This silk undervest is worn under the arms, and the mate to it has no sleeves at all, to speak of. For the first, insert square gussets, cut from bits of old silk stockings, sewing the edges together over and over. For the other make sleeves out of the long tops of worn silk stockings, ripping the hem, sewing the large end into the arm hole and knitting a small cuff to cling round the wrist. This knit skirt of Shetland wool is completely worn through in front, but it is a pity to throw aside so expensive a piece of underwear. You can match the wool in the city, and with wooden needles knit a new front which will give the skirt three seasons more wear. That Welsh flannel is wearing very thin on the front breadth, but the

rest is sound ; line the front with thin twilled wool that comes for lining, shrinking it first by washing. Such skirts must be lined, turned hinder part before, and upside down, and new borders crocheted for them before they can be called legitimately worn out. Do you know American women are the most careless and extravagant creatures about clothes in the world, taken as a whole ? I notice rich women, who always have been used to money, will twist and turn, retrim and refresh their clothes very much more than women who have to contrive for every new garment they get. One of my acquaintances paid three hundred dollars for an embroidered camel's hair suit, when such dresses first came in fashion ten years ago, and she bought an evening dress the same season for nine hundred dollars. Both gowns are in wear yet, remodeled to suit the style, and will reappear into newer ones to make variety for five years more. And all these hints about refreshing nice underwear I have drawn from the best dressed women of my acquaintance.

You will call my methods with old clothes making over, rather than mending, and so they are. Life is too short to do so much mending every week, and I pre-

fer to give a fortnight to it the beginning of each season — put on new bindings, stays and facings, sew on buttons so they will stay the whole year, fit up stockings and merino wear and have the business off my mind for three months, except the little looking over which takes in all not more than half an hour weekly.

Joe's trousers come last, and I don't wonder you heave a sigh over them, torn, dusty things as they are. Give Joe a clean, stiff manilla scrubbing-brush, which you will find the best possible thing for cleaning thick clothes, and have him take the trousers out on the back porch and brush them clean. Then leave them on the clothes line to blow and air in the sun half a day before you mend them, and they will be much pleasanter handling. There must be a patch on the knee of one pair, but neither Joe nor any one else need know it. Cut the hole square by a thread, cut your patch an inch and a half larger, baste it true and even, which is the nicest part of the work, stitch it by the machine, open the seams, dampen and press on the wrong side with your heaviest iron. Haven't I seen my friend Mrs. Burrows sit down before six pair of

the worst-looking trousers a boy ever went through, insert patches or half a leg as needed, machine stitching them so truly and pressing them so skilfully afterward that no boy, however notional, could object to wearing them.

Tailor's shears and goose, and ample cloth for piecing, made the work very different from the bungling patches which sad-eyed mothers toil over, leaving padded knees which justly are a trial to any boy's sensibilities. You should see the repairs which city tailors will put on gentlemen's clothes. I've seen an eighty-dollar coat with a dozen moth-holes up the front, darned and filled so nicely you had to take a magnifying-glass to find the places. When you know how, cloth is the easiest thing to mend nicely so that piecing won't show. When Joe buys new clothes, see that he brings home large pieces for mending, and don't roll them up and put them away to look bright and fresh when they are used to patch his faded trousers. Lay them in the sun, every day for a week, so that the color will be toned down, not to contrast with the rest of the suit. And put the evil day of mending far off by lining the knees of all

trousers with soft twilled linen which will take the wear. I believe in having garments so cared for and reinforced in weak places, and where the wear comes, that they do not need repair, but like the deacon's one-horse shay, last till they come to pieces, and are done with. You will find it much the best way.

#### XIV.—FOOD AND DRINK.

THE saying that every house has a skeleton in its closet has more fact than poetry about it, if we are to take the evidence of our sense of smell. You come upon the skeleton behind the door of an unaired clothes-closet press, where soiled things and stale bedroom odors have their own way week after week, till you wonder nice girls can bear to put on dresses which hang in them. Too many pantries and food closets have their spectre, if we judge by the mouldering, unsatisfactory odors about ice-box and meat safe, and the worst is, that it doesn't stay there, but comes out in the shape of dull headaches and sore throats and low fevers which haunt the house.

This is serious talk, but it isn't more serious than the facts call for. Doctors who spend their lives looking into these things, tell us that every year, out of a certain number in town or country, beside the



old and infirm, and those who inherit disease or die of accident, twenty thousand die needlessly of illness from bad air and bad food. They are not all poor folks who live in squalid, fever-stricken alleys and must buy the refuse of the markets to eat at all. The most luxurious homes suffer equally with the poor, and no house is safe until the skeleton has been hunted out and laid permanently by daily, intelligent care. Housekeeping is not a matter of mere comfort and respectability, and every woman and girl must learn their responsibilities, for the health, strength and life of the family is in their hands. The food people eat three times a day, the water they drink, the air they breathe, constantly have more to do with their happiness and success than money or talents, and more to do with their long life than any other care or medicine.

Pure water is growing scarcer to find as the country is older and more closely settled. For water may look clear as mountain brooks and taste sweet as the rill from a glacier, yet be very unsafe to use. There is a town in Northern Ohio noted for its spring of sparkling, delicious water, which never fails to make

new-comers violently ill when they drink it, from some mineral in solution. The wash of weedy shores, the use of animals, the drainage of fields, may make the pond water which supplies town reservoirs very unwholesome, while few would find anything to complain of in its taste or smell. Well water is not safe to drink if there is any sink drain, stable heap or vault within a hundred feet of it, for the wash from all such places soaks through the soil six feet in a year and more, and sooner or later will reach the well or the underground spring which supplies it. Nor can you call water fit to use when slops and washtubs are emptied on the ground about it, or rains can wash the soil through the ill-fitting curb. A tightly covered well is not so good as an open one, for water needs air to make it sweet. One thing you can be sure of, that though water which is bright and sparkling may be unsafe to drink, water which isn't clear, and looks or tastes unpleasant, is sure to be dangerous. When spring opens and the town water, or the well, runs roily and yellow for days from the melting of the last snow which carries the wash of the banks with it, or when in summer it smells fishy, or has the

cucumber taste we come to know so well from the water-weed or the mucus in the pipes which carry it, you don't need to be told that it isn't fit to use, and it's an even thing if you don't have low fever or chills before the season is over, from drinking it.

What are you going to do about it? Use filtered water for drinking and cooking entirely. You can buy a filter for five dollars, and you will find it the best use you can make of the money. Let alone health and safety, in a week after using it you will begin to wonder why the meat and vegetables taste so much nicer, and remark how much better tea and coffee this seems to be than the last you had, and after a little you will discover it is owing to the filtered water. Everything cooked in pure water has a finer taste, and tea and coffee are not the same things made with it. But a filter wants care ; for the sponge which strains the worst impurities out of the water, should be washed and dried in the sun, or in the oven, every day, or it soon grows foul. The best way is to have two sets of sponge, and let one air all day while the other is in use. Then the packing of sand and charcoal in time is clogged with impurities

which begin to wash back into the water, and the sand has to be washed, sunned, and dried, and the charcoal burnt over in a red-hot retort to consume the waste with which it is loaded. Be sure to get one of the new filters with two sets of strainers, which can be unscrewed as easily as you take the mold out of an ice cream freezer, so that one set can be cleansed while the other is at work. To make sure of pure water, change the packing once in three months. If you cannot have a filter, and are not certain of the safety of the water, boil it, and let it cool in a porous earthen jar in the shade and wind. Boiling frees it from animalcula or vegetable matter, and softens it, and emigrants whose neighbors were sickening all around them from the bad water of ponds and marshy springs, have kept in perfect health by drinking no water which had not first been boiled.

It is a great thing to have arrangements complete for a supply of pure water, and you want to do as much for food. Now let me tell you that you can't have food fit to eat that is kept in a close cupboard, however clean. If you have but a closet to keep food in, it must have a window and a gentle draft of air to

carry off the odors which else will spoil all the more delicate flavors. For the odors of food are its finer parts, and in an airless closet these settle and are absorbed by the wood, the plaster, the milk and butter, the flour and other eatables. Then you have the butter turning cheesy or frowy, the cream taking a bad taste, the milk souring sooner than it ought, the very pies, bread, and flour losing their wholesome sweetness. In the storeroom you can't keep salt fish, sour milk, cheese and onions in all their fragrance, and have anything else nice. Did you ever have the privilege of going into one of these common country store-rooms, not the sweet dainty places we read of, smelling of sugar, and spice, and all that's nice, but one of the sort we don't read of, clean and scoured, but where the fragrance of the bean pot vies with that of the buttermilk jar, and the sour yeast in the corner, and the fried fat in the doughnut kettle, and yesterday's soup, and to-day's chowder thicken the atmosphere with fish and onions? If you had, it would be the best lesson on ventilation of food you would want. The very shelves and walls of those old pantries get the cheesy and salt fish and hammy smell,

and you can't keep anything sweet in them till the plaster is whitewashed and the wood washed with purifying lye. If you would have wholesome food, Anna Maria, keep the pantry window down at the top night and day, except in the coldest weather.

Food of all kinds keeps better on clean dishes, so don't think it is too much trouble to pour the gravy into a fresh bowl and put the slices of meat on a clean plate, and turn the few spoonfuls of jam into a saucer instead of leaving it in the smeary compotier, which is a better name than our awkward "sauce-dish." Reason why, thin smears and daubs of food spoil soon and help spoil the rest. Especially see that the milk, cream and butter are put away in clean ware. Milk will keep sweet longer for this little precaution, and things are so much pleasanter to see and handle. Then everything must be closely covered with cloth and small plates. It is well to buy different sizes of cheap ware for covers, and the odd little pottery, mugs, bowls, and pitchers are very convenient for holding bits and ends of food too good to throw away. Beside, food keeps better in this ware than in anything else.

Fat of all kinds needs the nicest care to be sweet

and wholesome, for nothing takes odors more rapidly, and if you leave cupfuls of grease, or drippings, to stand open in the closet, you must expect to find a queer flavor in your fried potatoes, and several different savors in the plain piecrust beside the one you wanted. Keep all the fat from cooking in a small stone jar, well covered, try it out once a week into a clean jar and let it cool uncovered in a draft of air. In winter set it out doors to freeze, which refines it remarkably. At other times keep it tightly covered in the icebox. Fat which has absorbed a coarse taste can be purified by freezing and become nice again.

Butter wants much more care than most people give it, both in making and keeping. The way to secure good butter for winter is to buy it in fifty-pound firkins in September, when it is usually as cheap and good as at any season of the year, have it put up with a very little saltpetre and sugar, and in a clean place it will keep sweet a year. I haven't given many receipts, but here is one which I have tried over and over, and which can't be too widely known and used :

Take two pounds best dairy salt, one pound white sugar, one ounce saltpetre finely powdered and sifted through muslin. Mix all these well together. Keep in a bottle closely corked, and work one tablespoonful into one pound of butter and it will keep indefinitely. There is nothing hurtful in the compound, and the saltpetre prevents the acid from forming, which gives the butter a strong taste. You can work this into market butter if you choose to take the trouble, and I think it will repay you.

Instead of opening the firkin every day for butter for the table, cut out a week's supply at a time, to be kept in a small stone jar, and keep the butter in the large package closely covered top and sides, with clean linen cloths, and a large cloth and wooden cover over all. Butter soon loses its best flavor when open, and becomes not much better than so much suet. As good butter is the key note of a nice table, and as poor butter is a very unwholesome thing to eat at all, you must pay particular attention to its keeping. A plate of it that has been shut up in a closet with meat, left-over food and close air, is not fit to be eaten by a human being.



Keep milk in the purest, coldest air you can find, with a thin cloth over it. Don't take the warm new milk that hasn't had time to get cold since the milkman's cart hurried off with it from the cow, and set it away in a tightly stoppered can, for all milk wants to stand open to the air, that the animal heat and flavors may pass off thoroughly: if this isn't done, the particles in the milk decompose, giving the unpleasant odor you will notice in close cans, and making it unfit to use. Dairies which keep the milk in huge close tin drawers or cans instead of open pans make a great mistake, for neither butter nor milk kept in this way is fit for food, nor will it keep nearly as long as it should. Never let milk stand near a sink or any refuse. I have heard of children who took diphtheria from milk which had absorbed sewer air from the vent of a stationary washbasin where the nurse kept the pitcher cool at night. If you must keep milk in a sick-room, nursery, or in a close closet, let it cool and air for three hours in the best place you can find for it, then put it in a tight can, with a flannel case, and set it in a shallow pan of water in a draft, which will keep it cold and preserve it sweet as long as possible.

The icebox or refrigerator wants a great deal more care than it gets in general. Left to the servants, and only half cleaned in a season, it is the most uninviting place for food one can imagine. The waste pipe should be in order, so that no water stands in the box, for water melts ice, and moisture spoils food quickly. The box should be washed thoroughly with strong hot suds, rinsing with cold water, wiping and airing before fresh ice is put in. "Well, ma'am," the old iceman said as he waited for Mary to finish wiping the box one morning, "I'm pleased to find your box is always clean, for ice wants a clean place. If you could see some of the boxes we put into, with splashes of sour milk and grease and scraps of meat and potatoes and everything sticking to the shelves as the girls leave 'em! I don't see how anybody can eat what comes out of them." Every plate, pitcher, and dish that goes into the icebox should be clean as possible and closely covered. All dark corners of meat should be trimmed off, for these spoil quickly and give a stale smell to the box. You do not need to be told that vegetables and meat must be kept separately from milk, butter, and more delicate things.

It is a good plan to keep lumps of charcoal in each compartment to purify the air, and absorb any odors that may escape.

The care of meat is a nice thing too, and for the health of the family, needs more attention than it often gets. After it has been well-chosen, bright colored, fine-grained, with a firm white fat, freshly cut, with no dried and darkened edges or corners to spoil, and sent home, it must not lie in paper one moment more than is necessary, for paper, which is nothing but pulp of rotten rags, glue and lime, spoils food very soon. Take the meat out, and the first thing scrape it clean all over. . You hear people tell you to wash meat before cooking, and others say that it should be wiped only, for water washes away the flavor, but scraping removes all that is not nice, and the meat keeps better for being put away clean. Fish should be cleaned and wiped with a coarse towel and lie wrapped in clean dry cloth with salt over it. Meat may be kept without salt by searing the outside on a very hot griddle, turning it on all sides and letting each cook half a minute. This closes the pores so that the juice does not escape, and the

air cannot readily affect the flesh; it also makes the meat tender. Keep it in pure air, away from sour milk, yeast, salt fish, or any strong flavors, for meat and flour absorb bad air as well as butter, and spoil the quicker for it.

Vegetables need a cold dark place where they will not freeze. They should have clean bins or boxes, and be clean themselves when stored. A furnace-warmed cellar is no place for them. A cold, dark cellar or garret is the best place for fruit, which should be often sorted and picked over. Apples take bad flavors from being with other stores. Pick out all inferior and bruised ones at first, and make them into apple butter, which is the best way of keeping them, and is always ready for pies; and as a *compote*, which is better, I think, than our word sauce, which has so many other meanings already. Potatoes should be picked over in February, and scalded in a kettle of boiling water for two or three minutes, to prevent sprouting. You will find your spring potatoes much better for it. Onions should be kept in shallow boxes, and need as much looking after as choice fruit, for they are very sensitive to bad air, and, when

not in the best condition, are about as healthy to eat as diseased meat. When perfectly sound there is no healthier food than onions, and an old English rhyme runs :

Eat leeks in March and onions in May,  
And all the year after physicians may play ;

which is very sound sense, as old housekeepers and doctors can tell you. Onions purify the blood, correct biliousness and dyspepsia, and are better for consumption and children's diseases than most medicines. Many vegetables have strong medicinal qualities. Tomatoes have a similar principle to calomel, but not so injurious. All the talk about injury from tomatoes comes from eating them unripe or overripe, or from cans where their acid has dissolved and corroded the tin. I hope some time people will know enough to put tomatoes up in glass jars exclusively. Sour vegetables, or fruit shut up in tin cans for six months, cannot be the most wholesome. The rind of cucumbers contains a very strong purgative, which is a reason why one should be very careful to pare them perfectly, and soak them in cold

water an hour to extract the drastic juice. One last word: never serve any dish of whose perfect sweetness you are not entirely sure. The slightest stale, flat, or changed taste is reason enough to throw it away. I knew a whole family made violently ill by eating a soup which stood a trifle too long in warm weather. Not one of those who ate it tasted anything amiss, but the cook confessed she couldn't be sure whether anything was the matter with it or not, and she thought it too good to throw away. I don't think any of those people got well of the sickness the whole summer for this paltry economy. The reason why such care is urged in keeping and storing food, and keeping dishes and cooking utensils strictly clean, is because the little decay or ferment, such as gives the rank smell to ill-washed kettles, will start a change in food which is very dangerous in the system. When your mother or aunt complains of dinner not agreeing with her, or one of the boys calls out in the night for Jamaica Ginger, you don't think that the slightly sour bread, or the canned tomatoes that had grown sharp, or the stew that had changed, "not enough to hurt," as most cooks say — those few drops

of cankering acid, or yeastly ferment — have acted on the sensitive juices and tissues of the body like verdigris or calomel. People can eat food that isn't just right a good while and not notice the effect, but nature always pays her debts. These things have what doctors call a cumulative effect, which means that it grows stronger by repetition, till an ulcerated sore throat, or attack of colic, pulls one down, and he never gets his strength fully back again. One hears such sad cases of neglect all the time. Three years ago this spring, a young lady of one of the wealthiest families in Boston went to finish her shopping for Newport. It was a warm, oppressive day, and going out of the store, she felt suddenly faint. Her strength was utterly prostrated from that moment; she was taken home in a carriage, and in two weeks was dead from diphtheria. In that strictly guarded home, with every appliance for health and luxury, the cause was found in the waterpipe which led from the expensive refrigerator, with its plate-glass doors and marble shelves, to the house drain, so that all its vile air rose among the food and poisoned all the inmates. Neither the smart footman

nor the first-class cook had noticed anything wrong, for people in general have very blunted sense of smell.

Be thankful if you have senses which quickly warn you of unwholesome air. Never mind if dull people tell you that "the smell is in your imagination," for the fault lies with them and not with you. If all this watching and looking after things seems too much effort, remember that the thing in this world which can be done without effort and care is not worth attempting; and the best inheritance in this world is an athletic, healthy spirit, in love with work for its own sake, and which counts its ends worth all the strength and striving one can put forth.



## XV.—A SCREW LOOSE.

YOU wanted me, Anna Maria, to go over things this morning, and decide what was best to do with them before spring cleaning. You are thinking about draperies and toilet mats, mantel screens and corner brackets, spring dresses and Kate Greenaway aprons, with all the pretty devices a girl runs over in her mind. You want the house and its belongings just as bright and pretty as it can be with what you have. The only trouble is you don't know where to begin.

There is a story of a man who had an ambitious wife, who used to say he wanted to be rich, and his wife only wanted to be "comfortably off;" but he declared he would be rich a long time before she was comfortable. Everybody wants to be artistic now where people used to be content with being comfortable. Yet I've seen plenty of folks who thought their houses

artistic who would never be in reach of comfort. We will make sure of the comfort first, without leaving taste out, and I think in going over the house, we will begin at the front door.

Do you notice how loose the knob is, how it swerves in your hand as you try to turn it, and how Charlie has to twist and turn the handle two or three times in his little red-mittened hand before the door opens, when he comes from school in a hurry; and what a sense of irritation it gives one every time he or she takes the ill-conditioned thing in hand? One of these times it will come off, and there will be a day's bother for the family before it is repaired. Put a stop to all this vexation at once by finding a screw-driver and fastening the loose bolt. Life is too short, too full of better things, to have its energies wasted by such petty fret and hindrance. The time is nothing; the annoyance repeated five or six times a day for weeks is something serious in the end. Yet how many families endure such annoyances for a whole season for want of two minutes' work with a common tool, which any schoolboy or girl should be able to do.

The screw is gone? Now, you remember, you swept

it up last week and threw it into the fire, thinking it wasn't worth saving. You can buy a dozen such screws for five cents, and it wasn't worth the trouble of picking up that one. Beside, if you did, it would only lie around on the mantel or window sill for weeks, and be in the way every time you dusted. You hate uninteresting trash about a house. The boys are always picking up nails and bits of lead or tin, and the consequence is that windows and shelves are decorated with such rubbish. You don't mind saving, but you don't like the litter it makes.

I sympathize with you entirely there. I knew a family where the father was punctilious about saving every nail, every scrap of string, every sheet of paper that came into the house, and I know what a burden he made life to his womenkind who liked neat ways, and were always troubled to put away his nails and bits of wire, the nuts and rivets, the tags and strings by which his presence through the house could be traced. This fashion of saving made me hate the very idea of being careful, or of keeping little things ; and it was not till I had a house of my own that I learned how valuable trifles can be, and that not the

saving was to be dreaded, but the disorder. You want not only to save, but to know how to save.

For want of that tiny screw to the doorknob, you will have to find Willie, see that he is neat enough to go down town, and send him to the shop for a paper of screws. As Willie is with the rest of the boys, watching the ice break up in the river, and will have to change his boots when he comes home, and get you to sew a button on his coat, and you will have to see that his face is clean, his hair brushed, and his mittens on, and he will have to bring back samples of screws before you can get the right size, I think you will agree that it would have been less trouble to save the screw in the beginning; better still to have tightened it as soon as it came loose. But while you wait for the screws, let us provide against such awkwardness happening again. I want to give you a charm against all litter of nails and strings, all losing of screws, loss and breakage of every sort, as far as mortal can prevent. You want a light wooden tray—an old kitchen knife-box, or quarter-box for raisins will answer—with handle in the middle, and small partitions in the sides to hold things of different sizes.

Have the tray finished as nicely as you can, scrubbed with sand or sandpapered, all roughness smoothed, and cracks filled, last of all, finished with oil varnish which will not chip like spirit varnish. A neat tray that you don't object to handle is more likely to be used than a rough, grimy box no one wants to touch. In this tray you want tools: a claw-hammer large enough and heavy enough to drive a ten-penny nail, and let me tell you, though you are a girl, it is easier to drive nails with a hammer of some weight than with these foolish light tools sold "for ladies' use." Next, you need a common screw-driver, such as comes with sewing machines, and costs five cents; a larger one for obstinate screws, twenty-five cents; a gimlet for boring holes, five cents; two files, one coarse, one fine, the two costing twenty-five cents; a handsaw, fifty cents; and a good jack-knife worth twenty-five. You have a hatchet with broad blade already — as most families do — but is it sharp? If not, the kitchen grindstone will set that right. Add to these, if you choose, a kit of soldering tools, which come for women's use in a neat wooden box for fifty cents, iron, scraper, solder and resin complete. Also a

glue-pot and two wooden clamps at five cents apiece, and you cannot only save the cost of repairs, which is the least consideration, but also the waiting for things which need mending, and the vexation of careless workmen and slighted work. Things have come to such a pass now that the ordinary workman will often refuse to mend a thing at all, preferring you should pay the price for a new one. As he says, "Not wanting to be bothered with repairs." I have taken my French coffee-pot to the shop to have a trifle of soldering done which would restore its usefulness, and the tinman refused to touch it. He would sell me a new pot, price two dollars and fifty cents, but he would not do twenty-five cents' worth of work on the old one. "It was too much bother to do small jobs."

I did not give up my coffee-pot, which made such incomparable coffee, but waited until I found an old-fashioned tinner who for thirty cents gave back the pot ready to last longer than a new one. It often happens that the first of any convenience manufactured, especially of patent articles, are much better made than any after, and you have better wear from an old

thing mended than from a new and inferior one.

Don't tell me you can't use a soldering iron or a saw. I know a dozen women as clever with such things as their brothers. If you don't know how at first, you can learn by practice ; and you may as well do your own bungling and botching as pay workmen for it, and most of them botch repairs anyhow. There is nothing in the ordinary repairs of a house, in tin, wood, or iron, painting or puttying, which is not as easy for a girl or woman as half the work which properly falls to her share. For instance, the door of a closet sticks, and every time it is opened you must work and coax it, bear down on the handle or kick the panel before it will budge. I have seen families worry with a door for years without the energy to put it in order. You can see by the mark on the floor or frame what the matter is. The door needs planing off the eighth of an inch on some corner. The best way to cure it is to take it off the hinges, and have the edge planed true ; but this is too heavy for you, though I have seen a slender woman take a door down, trim it with her jack-plane, and put it up in less time than one could send for a carpenter. This trouble you can

remedy by paring the corner very carefully with a sharp knife, and rubbing it smooth with sand-paper. A window rattles at night, disturbing the sleep of every one near it. Whittle out two small wedges of hard wood to fit between the sash and window-frame, and the clatter is stopped.

But the question is where to find a bit of hard wood when wanted. An old slate frame was burned up last week of seasoned maple, just right for such uses. The odd block from the baby's old set would do, but that was burned too. Better keep a box to save such things. A window shade hangs awry, a distress to sight, and to the hand of any one who wants to pull it up. Usually such things hang till the shade is half ruined. Take it down at once. Your fine screw-driver pries out the little nails easily; the little clamp which screws on the table holds roller and holland straight at one end, while you tack the other with your sure-headed hammer. A tiny rivet is wanting for the roller cap — somebody brushed it off the window sill when it fell, and thought no more about it. You can't get such a rivet short of the factory where the curtain fixtures were made; dealers



do not keep them. You must put up another socket. There has been one calmly rusting on the wash-room window these three months. What a rusty, disagreeable object to touch ! Boil it in your lye-can a few moments ; it comes out clean and bright. The screws have worn the wood in the screw-holes because somebody tried to pry them out with the hatchet, like nails, the last time the shades were taken down, instead of unscrewing them. Use a size larger screw. Where to find them ? It seems to me that for three months I have seen screws, nails, rivets, wherever such things ought not to be — on the kitchen mantel-piece last week, on the flower-stand week before, on the window in Willie's room, or the sidelight in the hall where he tucked them before darting out to play. Of course they are not to be found now. But I'll tell you where they ought to be after this — in one of the compartments of your tray, where every such thing as a fixture, or part of a fixture, should be kept, together with tacks, brads, nuts, and all the things which are useless till they prove invaluable.

To gather these things is the use of those handy modern articles known as catchalls. Every room in

the house should have one of these. A cigar-box, decorated, makes a good one to stand on the mantel and receive odds and ends, from pens to nails, old keys, bits of metal, or hard wood, waste paper, rags and strings going into a waste-basket fanciful enough to disguise the litter it contains.

Nobody wants to run to the kitchen closet and work tray with every nail, or bit of rubbish, but it is dropped in the little carved catchall and nobody the wiser till the end of the week, when all these receptacles are to be emptied, contents sorted, and each kind go to its own place, the rags to the big rag bag in the stair closet, the hardware to the scrap tray where nails of one size drop in their division, screws in theirs, nuts and bolts in their own, and pieces of seasoned hard wood go in a box by themselves, ready for the boys' jack-knives or your "Boston knife," when wanted. The use of tools will teach you the worth of such material. Have a place for it, with convenient catchalls to receive house litter, and you will find that it is better to keep a thing a dozen years till you want it, than to once want it, and be without.

So, when Willie splits up the store boxes for kindling, teach him to draw out all the long, slender nails first, and put them away, because such nails are best for holding boards together, and are not commonly sold. That bit of hoop iron will serve to brace your trunk when it begins to gape at corners. Those little, long nails from the raisin-boxes are the only ones to tack the corners of trunk trays so that they will hold, and hold all the better for being bound with that thin brass off a foreign package you were just going to throw away. Willie wants new partitions in his insect cases. He can whittle them out of the soft wood of broken clothes pins. Or he wants to line his rabbit hutch so the inmates cannot gnaw their way through. Bricks are out of the question, but tomato cans are not. Heat them, when empty, till the solder melts, and the ends drop out, when you have square pieces of tin which need hammering or rolling flat to fit them for lining or roofing small pens. Any boy can nail these pieces around the lower part of a rabbit pen or chicken house, making it both rabbit and rat proof. And this is one of a hundred ways in which rubbish can be turned to use.

## XVI.—WHEN COMPANY COMES.

WELL," says Judith Purvear, opening her hand-  
some fur-lined circular, and throwing back  
her thick satin bonnet-strings, as she settles herself  
for a neighborly call, "I've just been to Mrs. Hill-  
yer's over on Spring street, and such a state as that  
woman was in! I don't doubt she's out of her mind  
by this time! Expecting company, you know—her  
brother's wife she never has seen and her mother  
coming on to stay a fortnight on their way to the other  
brother's, in Maine. You know Penelope Hillyer is  
a great hand to put on all the style she can carry, and  
her mother learned it to her. And that little Jennie  
Hillyer is so anxious and so afraid everything won't  
be just right, it's funny. She's had all the carpets up,  
and the paint scrubbed, and cut up her organdy dress  
to flounce the toilet table, and sent to town for English  
preserves and pickles for fear Penelope won't think

hers good enough ; and she wanted to know if I thought it would do to put the big easy-chair in the parlor for old Mrs. Spinner, because the sun has faded the reps ; and would I hang the lace curtains all round the bay window, or just across the arch ; and when I dined at the Wards' were the spoons crossed at the corners of the table, or laid beside the dishes, and was the bread on table or on the sideboard ; and did I think it would do to have colored napkins for breakfast, as they did on account of the children — she had a set of such pretty colored ones — and would I set the cups and saucers ready for pouring coffee, or pile them together — she heard both ways were used ; and would I have boiled ham for breakfast, or wouldn't folks expect it ? Boiled ham for breakfast ! Where did you ever hear of that ! *Where* do you suppose she was raised ? ”

It wasn't worth taking up seriously. Such a woman never knows when she has the worst of it ; but my sympathies went with little Mrs. Hillyer, anxious to please her grand sister-in-law, and worrying about small proprieties, yet ready to make the queerest blunders. She went from school-life to housekeeping with

very little practice of the latter — it would come of itself when it was needed, her mother said. But poor health came first, and with slender strength, the care of children, and a small income, she had fallen out of all ways of living save the easiest, and she never knew the art to make the easy-going life graceful. The family lived on picked-up dinners and scrappy breakfasts.

Tidying was going on at all hours of the day, and was never done, after all; and the poor little woman never was through with her work, or knew any satisfaction in doing it. She couldn't put more strength into her overwrought brain and muscles, so as to grasp her difficulties, and sweep them out of the way any more than you could roll the ton of rock that lies by the road. But, worse than her inefficiency, was the coarseness of the comfortable, well-to-do woman who could only see something to laugh and scream over in the troubles and mistakes of her weaker neighbor. I wish I could make you see the horror and vulgarity of this spirit which seems spreading among the women and girls of to-day. "I could forgive a woman any fault," said one who knew the

world, "sooner than contempt of a less fortunate neighbor."

If you don't want company to be a burden and a bore, and meet it with more blunders than poor Mrs. Hillyer, learn how to keep house for yourself first. And more than this, set yourself to learn the standards of good taste in matters great and small, even of such things as napkins and teacups, as well as more serious matters. In every two ways of doing things one of them is sure to be better than the other; and you may as well find out which it is, for these little things give the grace to housekeeping which no money can procure. Housekeeping! I write the word with a sort of love, for to me it means home-having! Just take down Mrs. Stowe's *House and Home Papers* to-night, and read the chapter which has these pictures of the noble housekeepers of New England.

In earlier ages the highest born, wealthiest and proudest ladies were skilled in the simple labors of the household. . . . By a lady we mean a woman of education, of liberal tastes and ideas, who without any very material additions or changes would be recognized as a lady in any circle of the Old World or the New. The existence of a class of ladies who do their own work

is a fact peculiar to American society. In early times were to be seen families of daughters, handsome, strong women, rising each day to their indoor work with cheerful alertness, one to sweep the room, another to make the fire, while a third prepared the breakfast for the father and brothers, and they chatted meanwhile of books, studies and embroidery, discussed the last new poem, or some historical topic started by grave reading; or perhaps a rural ball. They spun with the book tied to the distaff; they wove; they did all manner of fine needlework; they made lace, painted flowers—in short, in the boundless consciousness of activity, invention, and perfect health, set themselves to any work of which they had ever read or thought. The amount of fancy work done in our day by girls who have nothing else to do will not equal what was done by those who performed, in addition, the whole work of the family. Those remarkable women of old were in a measure made by circumstances. There were no servants to be had, and so children were trained to habits of industry and mechanical adroitness from the cradle. Every movement was calculated, and she who took two steps when one would do lost her reputation for faculty. Now if every young woman learned to do housework and cultivated her practical faculties in early life she would in the first place be more likely to keep her servants, or would avoid that wear and tear of ill success in those matters on which family health and temper mainly depend.

The spirit of the chapter is condensed into the par-



agraph. Such young housekeepers as Mrs. Stowe describes are yet to be found in our American society, where they are its flower, of a kind which will come into cultivation again with the true damask rose and clove gilly-flower for which florists are beginning to look in old-fashioned gardens. It is a becoming ambition for any girl to aim at being one of them. And the final pride of housekeeping is to receive company well, so that you will not find it a burden, nor those who come to your house find themselves less comfortable than in their own.

Of course to do this, you will have to learn to treat yourself well; not like the genteel ladies we read of, who have hash and gingerbread lunch served with the same ceremony as a state dinner, to keep the children and servant-maid in training, but in that easy, well-mannered way which is neither slovenly when alone or stiff in company.

Two safe rules for entertaining are: Seldom apologize; never pretend. If you don't have dinner in three courses beside dessert every day, and you *know* Henrietta or Penelope doesn't either, why trouble yourself and the maid with changes of plates, and

bringing in coffee in the small cups, and having out the finger-bowls that you use precisely a dozen times a year? The girl is nervous for fear she will not hand the cups, or use the berry service right, and you are secretly nervous for fear she may drop the precious ware, and forget to talk amusingly, and Penelope sees through it all. That's all you get by this bit of pretence. But you can every day train the girl or train yourself to wait on the table dexterously and quickly, which is the greatest comfort at any dinner, whether of herbs or roast fillet, with game removes, and the cloth and napkins may be always fresh and well-ironed, not starched so that they slip from handling, or ironed askew with machine hems drawn and shrunk in washing.

The dishes may be ranged orderly on the table, and unsightly things removed at once, like the shells of baked potatoes and the oatmeal saucers, when used. To do this without disturbance, you want the little side-table, with two or three shelves to stand at your elbow while presiding at meals, with relays of dessert plates or dessert itself, extra spoons, knives and napkins, a bowl of hot water, and nice towel if

spoons and things need washing to go around for different courses, while the lower shelf may receive the soiled plates, and keep them out of sight. One house-keeper I know has her bright little single oil stove with its bright brass and nickel-trimmings on such a table, and bakes her delicate griddle-cakes, boils eggs, or broils cutlets on a covered broiler while at the table. Why not? She does not wish to lose the cheery breakfast chat with family and guest, so she makes her work becoming enough to bring into the room with them. The batter is in a smooth, clay jar, modeled for decoration, but remarkably good she finds for kitchen use, or in one of those embossed stone-ware mugs of *Flandres gres* which you find at the German importers. The chops, or steak, neatly trimmed, are on a covered plate, to be cooked in a sheet iron broiler and served smoking hot to each person, just as the famous Beefsteak Club of London serves them in the grill-room to its titled members from its silver gridirons. It is all done like a lady, noiselessly and quickly, so that it is a treat to take a breakfast from her hands.

Breakfast over, such a woman will see that her

guest is comfortably bestowed somewhere, before going to her own work. A visitor cannot expect you to devote your whole time to her, and you would both grow tired of each other probably, if you did. Of course if your cousin or old schoolmate from Minnesota or Idaho or Tahiti has come to her old home for a visit which she only expects to repeat once or twice in her lifetime, or the old neighbor who rarely crosses her own doorsill comes to stay a day and night with you, you will wish to spend every moment possible with her; and this must be arranged for beforehand.

If it is an intimate friend, and you think she would like it, take her out in your kitchen with you for a cosey chat while you wash the dishes and beat up the pudding for dinner. Try to have things about your kitchen cabinet, so that polite persons will not be frightened to peep into it. One of the most charming visits I ever had in my life was with a New England literary woman who did her own work, and the evenings in her pretty, up-stairs drawing-room, when she set the music-box playing softly, and showed her choice photographs and relics, and

told of her Washington winter, or the long afternoon drives when we went through delicious coast scenery one day to see a quaint and celebrated collection of historical curiosities, and the next to call on Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford and the poet Whittier, were hardly more delightful than the mornings she went through her dishes and dusting, and let me go with her, while we cracked jokes in abandoned ease and long aprons. By all means, give a visitor her choice, naming several occupations available.

“ Now, Emma, there’s the last *Round Robin* novel, and the *Century*, if you want to curl down in the rocking-chair and read, and the bookcase never is locked, or the garden is pleasant for a stroll, and there’s a nice view from the end of the street if you care to go farther ; or if you want, bring your fancy work where I am, and we’ll talk enough to forget we’re in working quarters.”

But have things prepared so that housekeeping will claim you as briefly as possible ; and it is surprising how much can be done before a visit, even to having vegetables washed for three or four days, soup ready for heating up, jellies, creams, tarts, fruit picked,

all dusting and cleaning done to your satisfaction, relays of clean towels and napkins all ready, plans made for entertaining your guest, the piano tuned, the carriage in order, even if it is only an old chaise to be brushed, washed, and the tires tightened. See that these things are done in time and not left to the last minute.

It's a piece of common care for your guest's comfort to see that she has as good a bed to sleep in as you can give her. Not only that the counterpane and toilet covers and mats are the freshest, but that the room, bed and pillows have been aired and sunned thoroughly the day before they are to be used. I have been put to sleep in a bed where the blankets were absolutely wet to the touch with sea air, and the mistress of the house next day was surprised, "for the things had been out in the sun all day less than a month before." The fever caught in that damp room lasted all summer. People grow so insensible to the odors and atmosphere about them that they never can be sure how these things may affect others coming freshly into them. You in health and elasticity may sleep soundly on a husk mattress

on which a person with weak spine will toss all night in torture. And you may very properly think nothing better for most of the world than your nice hair mattress, when your old lady visitor may lose her rest the week she is with you for want of the feather-bed which she has used since childhood. Or a susceptible person will find a lasting headache brought on by sleeping on soft low pillows, when a tendency of blood to the head requires that it should be kept up by three well-filled ones. Nothing shows a narrow, meagre mind worse than inability to comprehend or allow for other people's habits which vary from your own. You may be as sure as you exist that hard beds and no pillows are best for health, and yet it may be just as true that some difference in the circulation or the nerves renders feather-bed and high pillows indispensable to the well-being of others. Inquire into these likings of an elderly visitor, or one who is out of health, if you don't wish their stay with you to be a penance. Consult their habits as far as you can as to the hours of rising and retiring and meals. In chilly mornings send up a pitcher of hot water, and light a fire for them to dress by, without

needing to be asked for such comforts. Have the extra pillow and blankets in the room, and call attention to them when showing the guest up at night. Always take a visitor to the chamber assigned on arrival, as she may wish to put her toilet in order. Open closet and bureaus she is to have, for a guest has been known too bashful or delicate to appropriate them to her own use without permission. See that there is drinking water in reach, for one does not feel like wandering through a strange house in search of the ice pitcher, or like sending some one after it every time she is thirsty. Ink for writing, which is not conveniently carried in a trunk, matches, and a *clean*, well-trimmed lamp or candle, should be ready in the room, and some kind of foot warmer, if the weather is at all chilly and the fire cannot be lit. At night, just before retiring, have any slops in the rooms emptied, the pitcher refilled, the lamp wiped dry of oil and lighted ready, the heat turned on if there is a register, a nice book left out for a "nightcap," some trifle to eat in a plate — a little confectionery, crackers, apples, oranges — for one may lie awake hours with nervousness when a few nibbles of food would give



the craving stomach something to do, draw the blood from the brain and send one to sleep comfortably. If you grudge these attentions, either you can't care much for your guest, or you need lessons in hospitality ; and either way, had better dispense with invitations till you are ready to carry them out.

So in food your habits may be so different from your visitor's as to interfere with her health, and a little inquiry is the safest thing. Don't say you are not going to put yourself out for people ; that what is good enough for you must do for them. In your house every one is dependent on you for comfort, and to make your tastes the limit for others is too boorish and selfish to contemplate. A rather conspicuous instance is in mind, when a well-known, cultivated Eastern lady left a comfortable home by advice of her physician, to travel in the Pacific States. Those who have taken the journey will know how she missed the carefully prepared table, the ever ready bath and the warm rooms people are used to in good homes. After her return one of the families she visited made their guest the subject of a magazine caricature, the head and front of her

offence being that the poor, worried invalid wanted fruit for breakfast, asked for a hot bath at night, finding herself in a house with a bath room, and complained of the poor quality of the grapes and the rawness of the climate as she had found it. Mighty crimes in a guest, who came with a letter from a mutual friend, requesting that all attention should be paid her. The family who could neither take pains to procure nice fresh fruit for a visitor when it was plenty, nor furnish a bath which would have been unspeakable relief to a nervous sufferer, and must then ridicule her publicly in an article, where her real name was given with the change only of a single letter, is a specimen of a sort of breeding not so uncommon as it should be, and will do for a pattern to avoid. I'm not talking now of the duties of guests to their entertainers; you have only to answer for your own part as hostess, which you are not to slight for any short comings of your guest. But I have seen such wretched illiberality of spirit between people of a different style of living and a thoughtless young visitor who perhaps picked the flowers and fruit more lavishly than her hosts were used to, or sat up later and burned more gas or

oil than they thought proper, or kept the horse out too long for the convenience of the family, though not to any real injury, that I want to remind you that you don't receive guests to make them happy in your way, but their own, and you should either be willing to sacrifice some of your ways to them, or avoid trouble by never inviting them at all. It is a tribute to both sides when people of different families can stay a fortnight in each other's houses and part with as high regard as when they met. But whether your beds and cooking are to your friend's liking or not, whether her manners suit your notions or not, one rule is binding on both if you would consider yourselves well-bred — that the confidence between host and guest is sacred. Your guest is not to be "talked over" after she leaves; neither the holes in her stockings nor her soiled petticoats, nor the way she lay abed mornings, nor the way she liked to attract attention, nor her appetite for Baldwin apples, any more than she is to report what a shabby table you kept, or how dull the evenings were, or what a curious old lady your deaf aunt was. Silence at once and forever on all that concerns those who have slept

under your roof. Do not allow yourself to be drawn into discussing their peculiarities, or betray a covert smile when they are named, or those who try to pump you will be the first to sneer at your loose tongue and bad manners when your back is turned. If your guest betrays you and circulates anything to your disadvantage, content yourself with explaining the matter when it comes up, but say nothing against her. In your silence, her ill-breeding betrays itself, and she is her own worst accuser.

## XVII.—MAKING THE BEST OF THINGS.

**Y**OUR little note slipped under the door last evening, on your way home from the druggist's, for Tom's toothache drops, came straight to heart and hand. You find home dull with the best care you can give it; and as you look round the shabby, commonplace rooms, you wish for some way of brightening them and brightening life together. Life seems rather "grubby" and tame to you, does it? — a common complaint at sixteen. In stories, you know, the young lady's arduous duty is to fill the vases and dust the ornaments, and I have seen young women who really thought they had made the best of their time when they had dawdled over cut flowers and china an hour of a morning.

In a world so full of novelties and delights as this, where there is so much to be done for one's

self and for others, can one be satisfied with mere touches and glances like this? Well might a keen novelist of the day say concerning one of his heroines : " She was a lady, and nothing else — the most charming and useless of creatures." She was not a lady, *pur sang*, or she would have been good for something; at least as much as the French duchesses who fled to England in the Revolution, who made caps and mantles for a living, or gave lessons in drawing, and did these things very well too. They were taught to do everything better than common people, as became their rank. The Princess Louise of England is a lady, if you please, but not a useless one. In their toyhouse at Osborn she and her royal sisters were taught every detail of housekeeping from washing and ironing shirts to cooking dinners and butter-making, under far more rigid inspection than you ever face, and she can decorate a room, or serve a supper skilfully, not disdaining any use of her hands to which hands can be put. The Prince of Wales very wisely insists that his lovely young daughters shall be taught different occupations as carefully as if they expected to earn their bread by them. They

are to take their studies, he directs, as thoroughly as if they were qualifying for governesses, and their mother, the Princess Alexandria, who, if stories are true, used to sew on her own gowns, sees to it that they neglect nothing either pleasant or convenient for a woman to know.

Girls and women of a certain inferior turn of mind are fond of thinking of their place in life as the woman's kingdom, and of themselves as queens and sovereigns of home, which is about as fine as these high-flyers can reach. These queens of the baking-pans and empresses of the pot lids find it consoling to move about their little houses in a halo of imagination, like that of the hired girl I knew, who confessed to wearing white satin and diamond earrings in fancy all the while her hands were in the dishwater scraping the frying-pan with her fingernails. I beg you to disdain such shams and affectations, and be proud enough to content yourself with the plain fact of being an American girl in modest circumstances, who is bound to make the best of everything with her own hands, and very thankful for the chance. You certainly can make your house

interesting, and your busy life will keep you out of a hundred absurdities and affectations. The funniest of common things is the way a girl takes to copying a favorite heroine by little pruderies and primnesses, as if she were educating herself into finer ladyhood, and by catching tricks of manner, she could imbibe a whole character.

If you ever resent the not-over-pleasant duties which crowd out so many pleasant things, you may take consolation from the letters of Mrs. Carlyle, who knew both sides of life. Brought up to elegant leisure, the only child of doting, well-to-do parents, and full of all the tastes which belong to a bright, accomplished, sensitive woman, she led the life of a poor man's wife for a score of years, bound to extract the utmost comfort and gentility out of a narrow income by the strictest economy and clever handiwork. Her letters to her old home friends are full of domestic affairs, notable cleanings and tearings-up when Mr. Carlyle was away, picking apart of mattresses, taking down bedsteads and soaking them to get rid of "beings," the bare idea of which sent her wild and Carlyle frantic, making of



bed hangings, which with their linings and trimming were a heavy work in those days of hand needlework, with help of her hired girls who smashed whole tables of china and got too drunk to stand; how she swept and "black-leaded" grates, made the cold meat do for days to save cooking, and boiled the porridge for supper by the parlor fire to save trouble—all told in the liveliest fashion, with fun, temper, and often tears in the words. But with all her heavy load of unshared care, the genuine sense of the woman speaks out in words like these, written from the home of her wealthy relatives on a visit :

I declare, I am heartily sorry for these girls in this absurd, indolent way, sailing down the stream of time. How grateful I ought to be to you, dear, for having rescued me out of the young-lady sphere! It is a thing that I cannot contemplate with the proper toleration.

Brave little woman ! She could paper, paint, scrub, and black grates, upholster and mend, even to cobbling Mr. Carlyle's cloth shoes all one New Year's Day, without over-much murmuring, but the aimless, endless young-lady life of dressing, sipping tea, read-

ing a little, riding a little, and doing fancy work a little, filled her with disgust, as it must every capable woman or girl who feels in herself the ability for more than mere slipping through life the easiest way.

If you look at your housework as the means to a delightful home, it will not seem hard or hateful ; even the dreaded sweeping day, which I own to hating worse than wash-day, leads to the repose of fresh, fragrant rooms, and sanctity from dust and defacement. It need not be quite so much a penance with proper things to do it. For a sweeping outfit you want several large covers of glazed cambric or chintz to throw over piano, sofa, and all the large pieces of furniture you cannot wheel out of the room. A bed cover is indispensable in sweeping chambers. The good old-fashioned ones used to be of nankeen, bordered with chintz stripes and the size three by four yards, to envelop everything about the bed. At least you can use old sheets and newspapers to cover things, if nothing else is at hand. A carpet-sweeper you must have, not because it does the work easier, so much as because it saves breathing dust, which is

dangerous for the lungs. The common brush sweepers are better than brooms, but I prefer the Atmospheric carpet-sweeper, which has a fan in the box, that draws all the dust and lint into it without any brush to clog or wear out the carpet. It is pretty to see how it licks lint and threads from the floor, leaving Brussels or ingrain as absolutely clean as if it came from a steam cleaner.

A long-handled sweeping-brush for wood floors and mattings, and a long dust brush for cornices and lintels, make work easy, but you can do it just as nicely with a clean broom kept soft by dipping in boiling suds every week, and wrapping a clean cloth round the head of it for high dusting. A large dustpan with tall, upright handle, four feet long, saves much tiresome stooping, and is more desirable than expensive brushes, if you can't have both. Stiff manilla paint brushes to dust corners and tufted furniture, soft brushes for mouldings, and feather brushes for highly polished wood complete the outfit; but in place of these one manages very well with a five-cent whisk broom and a soft old cotton duster.

In sweeping a parlor, first put all the vases and small ornaments out of the way in a basket or closet, that they need not become indistinguishable with dust. Put all the furniture possible in the hall, and cover pictures, book-cases, clock and other things so closely that dust cannot sift on them, carefully wiping off dust that has already settled on them. With a clean brush dust the upper part of the roller blinds and draw them up to their full height out of the way. Dust over doors and windows before you sweep, not to have a double cloud to brush down afterward. If you sweep with a broom, use damp tea leaves, bran, coarse meal, sawdust or dry snow to keep down the dust remembering to have these things damp, not wet ; to sprinkle only a yard or two where you mean to sweep at once, and to take it up with the sweepings before you go to the next place. Brushing a damp mass of dust and trash over a whole carpet, is not the way to improve it. Fine carpets like Wilton or Moquette should be swept with the pile, to keep them from wearing ; and dealers say that Brussels should be swept only one way. It is a good rule always to

begin at the corner farthest from the door, taking up the dust every yard or two. Take rugs up, bringing opposite sides together, not to spill their dust; lay them face down on green sward, or hang them so out of windows and beat the backs till all the dust is out. Beating on the face sends the dust into the firm woven ground of the rugs. Let them sun for an hour or two on the wrong side, then air in shade with the face up, finishing with a few minutes' broad sunshine to take out the smell which clings to fluffy mats as well as other unsunned carpets.

As soon as the sweeping is done, open all the windows wide to let as much dust blow out as may be, but keep the doors closed which lead to the rest of the house. While waiting for the dust to settle, go over the furniture in the hall or on the porch, using the stiff brush or whisk on all upholstery, brushing crevices and tufts thoroughly, and beating the cushions with the flat rattan bat sold for the purpose in fancy shops. Use the soft brush or cloth only on wood, but don't go over things with a feather duster and imagine you leave them clean. The dust flies and settles elsewhere for you to

breathe, and streaks are left in unlikely places. Use a slightly damp cloth to wipe off the dust, and carry it from the room. Read Miss Nightingale's *Notes on Nursing* if you want to know why a damp cloth is preferable to a flirting brush when dusting a room is in question.

The stiff brush comes in play for dusting window frames and baseboards *after* you have wiped the frames and swept the skirting with clean brush or broom into the dust-pan. Try to dust so that your cloth or brush leaves no soiled streak on paint or wall—a sort of shading not uncommon in easy-going houses. White spots on varnished furniture can be rubbed off with alcohol, kerosene, or a little wet ashes. Ink can be scoured off with sapolio, or if the wood is deeply stained, dilute vitriol and wash the spot many times, letting the liquid, which is dangerously caustic, soak in. Put a few drops of furniture polish on a woollen cloth and rub the chairs first washing smears off with kerosene, which also improves varnished wood.

Keep glue, shellac, varnish, a little white paint and brown or oak stain ready to touch up furniture

and woodwork. It looks shiftless to keep a dozen broken things about till it is worth while to send for a repairer, when every boy and girl of twelve can use glue and varnish as well, if they only learn. If the mirror frame is shabby, regild it with the materials which come ready for use, at fifty cents a box. If it is too far gone, paint the whole frame over, black, brown, deep red or white. If the grate frame and hearth are rusty, japan them with the black varnish any dealer will furnish for twenty-five cents, and give the coal-scuttle a coat while you are about it. Is there grease on the marble of bureau, table-top or mantel, try sapolio on it first, and then a paste of slacked lime and potash, which will draw the worst grease out of stone or floors. Is the wall paper torn, paste the loose end at once; if soiled or torn off, cut a square piece to match the figure exactly, and paste over the blemish. Fill holes in the plastering with plaster of paris mixed thick with water, smoothing with a knife. If the carpet shows grease spots, rub hard soap on them, and wash off with crash, rinsing with lather, and rubbing hard with dry crash. This will seldom hurt the colors, if

quickly done, using but little water. Rub rust off the stove with sand paper or the kitchen burnisher, *i. e.*, the steel pot cloth, before blacking it.

You would like to know how to make your sitting-room look cosey and "livable," and want some hints for the arrangement of furniture. A family room needs certain things to be inviting, one of which is a long lounge, not the wretched little parlor lounge that is neither good to sit or lie on, but a generous home-made one, with pillows, for tired people. Doctors say one can rest more lying down ten minutes than sitting down an hour. Next you want easy-chairs, Shaker, cane seat, rattan, wood or upholstered, it matters not, so there is a comfortable seat for each of the family. A wide round table where all can find room for work or books is desirable, for it gives all an equal chance, and is more inviting than other shapes. A cloth is in the way for an evening table. A book-shelf, not a book-case which takes room, wide, plain brackets and broad window seats for flowers, a clock, and clear glasses for bouquets, will be the furnishing strictly needed.

Scrupulous neatness is to be the first charm of



your rooms, which in showy upholstery or bare plainness, is distinct and attractive as the scent of lavender. Beside this, the secret of a pleasant room lies in what aunt Jane would call "having things correspond," or what an artist would call the unity of things—what old Caleb who "chores round" would say, unhesitatingly, was the keeping of things. You want a room mostly in one color or shades of a color. Perhaps you can't do much more in this way than to avoid green and red tidies and lamp-mats, or purple mats and pale blue tidies and deep blue vases, with bouquets on the front, to go with a scarlet and wood-color carpet. You can't get over the carpet, as you can't afford a new one, unless you take the bold step introduced by modern taste, and have it dyed deep red, brown, or deep blue, when the most obnoxious colors come out in different shades, making a fair artistic carpet. If I had an ugly carpet, I would treat it to a bath of madder dye, laid on scalding hot with a brush, before giving up the question. Dreadful, many-colored mats and cushion covers can certainly be dyed, and ten dollars in paint and dyeing will go farther toward

making a really agreeable room than a hundred in common furnishings. A coat of pinky white or pinky drab paint mixed with varnish, laid over doors and common furniture would harmonize with your madder red or brown or deep blue carpet, and when you "do up" shades and curtains next, try a few drops of cochineal in the starch, to give them a pleasing tinge. You don't begin to know the resources of simple things. .

## XVIII. — SHOPPING.

THERE is art in spending money, and you will find that knowing how to use it to advantage is the best help to a generous disposition. As Mrs. Carlyle in her shrewd Scotch way would observe, "There's a deal of spending in a dollar," if you know how to make the most out of it. "To make the crown a pound," or to make it go as far as a pound, is the lesson most of us have to learn nowadays, when the world is so full of wants that even the rich rarely have as much ready money as they need at their command. After all it is the contriving and making the most of every coin and scrap and handicraft that gives zest and flavor to our possessions, and to life.

The first thing in clever shopping is to know what you really want, and let me tell you many people never get so far in their lives as to know this. Take an evening to it—make a list of all you would like to

get if you had the money. Consider what substitutes you can contrive without spending, then strike out everything you *can* do without from the rest, and see how far you can indulge in the way of pleasant things which are not strictly necessities. Then write another list of things you need, and ought to have. It clears one's ideas and is a great help to thinking to write out these lists with the prices. Then you see just how far your money will go.

Don't rush out and buy at the first shop you come to, after the fashion of foolish damsels. A good buyer never spends money till she has been the round of the shops learning prices. You have heard deserved ridicule of idle women who spent their own time and the seller's, pulling over goods for amusement, on the plea that they were "pricing" things. But it is quite the usage and wholly allowable, to make the tour of shops to inform yourself on styles and prices. Take the early morning, or a rainy day when few customers are out, and the clerks have time to attend to you. Say politely that you do not mean to buy at once but wish to look at such and such goods, and learn the prices first, and use all the despatch you can, not to

take too much of the merchant's time for nothing. Learn to be prompt and decided in your choice, not to sit looking foolish over a counter of goods unable to make up your mind what you want, or be bullied or persuaded into buying what you don't really like. Refuse to let the clerk pull down things you do not need and cannot afford, on the plea of merely looking at them, for after a certain amount of attention he has a right to expect you to buy of him, and to feel ill-used if you do not. Be careful about giving trouble in these pricing expeditions, and you leave no hard feelings behind if you do not leave a penny in trade, or even buy the traditional paper of pins. Don't ask for samples unless you really need them and intend to buy. The girls and women who tell of the pretty percale and silk pieces they get for patchwork by asking for samples, confess to a petty fraud, unbecoming a lady, for it is neither more nor less than getting goods under false pretences. Be sure that experienced clerks know very well whether you are honestly and thriftily learning prices, intending to buy, or making pastime of looking over their goods and wasting their time and your own.

Every good shopper knows the best time for buying at low prices is when the height of the season is past, after New Year in winter, or in July and August. All classes of goods are then marked down in price to sell them off before the new goods come in for next season. Now you will find hosiery and underwear from one third to one half cheaper than the same qualities were before holidays, and now is the time to lay in a stock of woollen fabrics, flannels, blankets, towelings and housekeeping goods. Before the spring fashions are out and the rush of dress-making begins, all hands in the making-up department of large stores are busy on chemises, nightgowns and all sorts and sizes of underwear. The counters are piled with drifts of white garments, pretty with tucks, ruffles and embroidery at much less than you can get the material and have them made—yes—but not so cheap or neat as you can make them yourself. If the main point in your shopping is to make the most of a little money, and you have time at disposal, do not spend on ready-made clothing. The gown which looks so neat for one dollar, really takes but four yards of eight-cent cotton with five cents' worth

of thread and buttons and two yards of cheap embroidery. You can make a better gown easily in half a day with the sewing machine for half the money. Ready-made things are a boon to overworked mothers and busy women who have not time to set a stitch for themselves, but they look with envy on the trim, finished garments which nice sewers make for themselves. You want to make your own ruffling and knit or embroider your own fine durable trimming if you are bent on ladylike economies.

Buy all thick underwear in the between-season after the January stock-taking. The fine Scotch wool socks which were seventy-five cents in December are marked down to fifty cents now, and there are bargains in good strong hose for girls and boys for a third less than you can get them next fall. It is good judgment where economy is an object to buy all your flannels for next winter before April, from undervests to blankets. Save a little ready money to buy when things are cheap if you want your purse to hold out through the year.

By the way, bonbons and small wares run away with more of girls' money than they would like if they

knew it. If one spends only five cents a week in candy, it is two dollars and fifty cents a year, the price of a good book, a pretty ornament, or the materials for a lasting bit of decoration, which the girl who has *only* five cents a week to spare needs much more than she does walnut taffy or lime drops. Five cents a week for candy! More girls spend a dollar a week, and I know plenty of them who never come home from down town without their pound of "French mixed." Good candy is delightful and the craving for sweets is natural in young folks, but you hardly like to think of all the other things it runs away with in five years. Just look this question squarely in the face, whether you had rather have a sugar almond to nibble any hour of the day, or ten or twelve dollars more to spend at holidays. If you choose the latter, and want to get rid of the taste for sweets, buy a pound or two of the stuff and eat all you want for once. The girls in the confectioners' shops rarely care for candy, and you can soon break yourself of the craving for it all the time. Then if you want it afterward, arrange that it shall fall in with your expenses — a "quarter" of chocolate drops is no bad



substitute for a lunch in a day's shopping, or crackers and a box of bonbons for the family will give an inexpensive treat instead of a regular tea, after late dinner, Sundays or holiday evenings. I give this much space to the candy question, because it is one of the serious items in a modern girl's spending, and most families spend more for it than for their garden expenses and plumber's bills, if they only knew it. The readiest way to manage the candy bill is not to allow it as an extra, but make it fill the place of something else, as food or treat.

Then the little things, the spools of silk, the tape, hairpins and nets, the skeins of filoselle and crochet needles that are so trifling when bought, but take the change out of ten dollar bills so easily. The only way to reduce these expenses is to buy the year's needs at a time, and *make the supply last*. Count how many papers of hairpins you used last year, and how many pins and needles. Your account-book will tell if you keep one, and that's one of the benefits of keeping accounts—you know where you can save if you must. Four papers of hairpins, and three papers of pins, large, medium and small, and three papers of

assorted needles are all a girl can actually use in a year though not all she can waste. I hope you are not the girl I heard of at boarding-school who used to pull the pins from a paper and shower on the carpet so that she could always have one by stooping to pick it up wherever she stood. It was convenient, I grant, but the plan has its drawbacks. Yes, I can remember when the idea of taking care of pins and needles was insupportable to me in young lady days, when the word saving was as hateful to me as it is to most girls. But when I go by the pretty things in the holidays, and sigh for a beveled mirror in a plush frame, or a guipure canopy and coverlet, or an embroidered cushion that is beautiful as a painting, and think "You goose, you might have one and all these things for the money wasted in pins and findings in the course of your life"—why, small economies don't look as despicable as they used.

For the material part of her wardrobe, the first thing a girl wants to do when she comes to use her needle cleverly, is to buy a piece or two of good cotton and linen, for a full supply of lingerie—which sounds better than the nondescript word underwear.

Let her take a season or a year to the work, which will be a pride and satisfaction to her. The dainty tucks, and buttonhole scallops, and whipped ruffles instead of machine work, will give her belongings a value in every feminine eye which falls on them, and then I who scribble from week to week without stop must pay thirty dollars the dozen for things that don't begin to compare with yours which never cost you ten dollars. And I never take any comfort in these shop-made things either. You may choose for this work either the fine Lonsdale cambric at twelve and a half cents — not shirting by that name — or the heavy India cottons at forty cents a yard if you want fabric that will last for nice embroidery, or the white French percale at twenty-five cents. Or as the thrifty French seamstresses and waiting maids do, you may buy the finest unbleached cotton with roundest even thread, at ten cents, bleach and embroider it for something almost as nice as the higher priced imported cottons. The hand embroidered gowns you see marked as French and that sell from three to ten dollars each are made of soft Willimantic cotton at seven and eight cents a yard, wrought by fishermen's girls on

the Maine shores, or French Canadians in forest homes in the long winters of Prince Edward's or the Saguenay. As for linen, you will be lucky to find the Union linens, for personal or household use, which were common a few years ago, and which being half cotton were pleasanter, healthier and cheaper than the pure flax. Pure linen is desirable for handkerchiefs, towels, tablelinen and shirtmaking, rarely for other purposes. But in these goods there is much to know of the difference between the weight of single and "double damasks," "half-bleached," and "blue Barnesley," and true ecru, between Irish, Scotch and Saxony or Russian linen, which last is stronger and more lustrous than any other from the fine variety of flax grown for it. Pure linen has flat thread and pulls into ragged fibre, while cotton breaks short.

For dresses you want changes of pretty house gowns, in washing materials, which Americans will soon learn to use as much as the French do. But for this purpose do not choose the pretty satines and painted percales, which are meant to be made up with frippery of linen lace and satin ribbons, worn

a season without washing and thrown aside. They will not wash and wear a month to satisfaction. Buy the stout and fine American and English prints in small figures, and check gingham, to be made in their own style, not with puffed and draped overskirts, in imitation of the latest fashion plates, but in simple gowns or frocks, of Kate Greenaway figure if you like, such as the Lady Beatrice and Lady Gwendoline abroad wear at their lessons, and walks and painting till they are "out" in society and wear full toilets. For walking dress a fine flannel suiting is better style than brocaded wools or imitation stamped velvets as you know. Learn one safe rule, never to buy cheap trimming, such as fringes, velvet ribbons or beadwork. Self trimming, of stitching, folds and pleating of the dress material is always good, while cheap lace and finery stamp the wearer as vulgar at once. Linen-back velvet and satin answer as well or better than all silk materials for trimming because they are firmer and do not fray readily. Lift the velvet to the level of your eye against the light to see if the shade is blue black or rusty, or if the pile is thick and even as it should be. As a rule, trimming materials just

above the medium price wear longest and give satisfaction. The cheap stuff is of poor quality, the high-priced owes its cost not so much to quality as to some freak of fashion.

For better dress it is safe to buy standard materials and quiet colors, trusting the accompaniments to give it stylish air. Unless one goes out a good deal, a brocaded velvet dress or cloak for instance will be out of date long before it is ready to throw aside when you can wear a plain silk or cloth with trimming of fur one year, front of figured velvet the next, and embroidered bands or bright colored linings another. Do not buy fancy fabrics in cheap quality. They must be very good to wear at all.

In light weight silks, choose the smooth dull tafetta or the twilled, instead of thin, shiny gros grain. For trimming, buy thick, soft silks. But choosing a silk dress is another matter. As deceitful as silk ought to be a proverb. Probably not one silk dress out of a dozen gives satisfaction to its owner, by wearing as it should. I'm not speaking for girls who have half a dozen new gowns a year, but when you buy a silk dress, Anna Maria, you want something for the

investment that will look ladylike among the best, and will not deface or give out under three years' frequent wear. Then don't spend time looking over Bonnet's or Guinet's silk, but patronize your own country's manufacture. Don't you know that American silks are the standard for good qualities? Ask for the first quality of Cheney's American silk and be sure you get it, for the firm sends out two grades, and you want the best, pure silk, weighty but soft, with subdued lustre, that does not rustle overmuch, a silk for a lady's wear, and which is largely bought by English ladies for its excellence. There you have a dress to last from six to ten years according to the wear you give it, without cutting on the seams or wearing shiny. Silk is cheaper this year than for many a long one before it, but the American holds its own, here and abroad. You may not find the best quality outside the large cities — I never have been able to — but when you do, you will know what good silk ought to be.

And that reminds me, to tell you and all girls of the advantage in buying all you can in the large cities. I often think while passing the pretty things in the

shops that I, an old lady, have no longer use for, how delightful it would be to send excursions of country girls here twice a year to do their shopping. Why, it would be like dropping a little fortune into their laps, or doubling their spending money. The pretty percales and satines down to a shilling that were fifty cents the last I remember, the *foulé* cashmeres at half a dollar, Jerseys at two dollars, neat walking jackets that a ladylike girl need not despise as low as five dollars, and handsome long cloaks for fifteen and eighteen dollars — things of really good style, not rubbish. And the pretty laces, aprons, ribbons and kerchiefs for so little I wonder that city people with nieces in the country are not always sending presents for the pleasure of it. Of course you can send for catalogues and buy by mail, but catalogues have to be paid for by the makers and their prices are never anything near as low as you can buy yourself, being as a rule half as much again as the same goods would be sold to you over the counter of the same store. And the women who make a business of “shopping with taste and discretion” make higher charges still. If you want the benefit of shopping by mail, have a



correspondent in the city who doesn't make her living by that sort of thing; some girl who knows the shops and where to buy blonde hairpins for five cents a paper, and crimp nets for ten, and lovely ruffled white muslin aprons for twenty-five, and capital long spring gloves for a quarter, and Swede mosquetaires for seventy-five that won't give out while you are pulling them on. You might make the service mutual without either paying too dear for it, by giving her a percentage or by returning the favor to her family in buying their quinces, grapes, honey, and pounds of winter butter at country prices, as city people like to do. In this way city and country can keep up cordial acquaintance and help. Or you could send her yards of that pretty linen lace you knit at your leisure, or work a toilet set, or do some dainty sewing that town life has no time for. Such friendly little arrangements can put fresh grace and help into many quiet lives, and lengthen strait incomes just as well as if the fabled uncle from California had stepped in with the gift of the equally fabulous check—of which uncles are strangely forgetful nowadays.

## XIX. — SICKNESS IN THE HOUSE.

**Y**OUR mother sick, and Willie down with scarlet fever? Your heart and hands must be full, my dear girl, and your inexperience weighs you down, you say. But old and practical nurses took their first lessons sometime, in just such anxious trembling, when, for the first time, life to them seemed to become really life.

Patients should be upstairs, as infections rise, the spores and scales which carry the disease, and the air of the sick-room naturally floating upward with the currents of air. If scarlet fever, measles, diphtheria, or any such disease, is in a lower room, the upper part of the house is almost certain to be infected, and persons sleeping there are in danger. The best place for such a case is the large chamber in the wing, cut off from the rest of the house by the side entry, where the patient is away from the sights and

sounds of the living rooms, and it is easy to keep them free from infection. I know a house where such a room with windows on three sides is called the hospital chamber, and every one taken sick in the family at once goes into it. The room is specially furnished for sickness, with nothing in it that can be spared, to absorb or give off bad air. The walls are not papered, for paper absorbs infection and bad smells, but they are painted so as to be washed readily. There is no carpet for the same reason—the carpet of a room holding the germs of diphtheria or scarlet fever ready to give it to another, long after the first patient is well. The floor is covered with matting to deaden sound, for matting can be washed with carbolic acid as well as boards, and so disinfected. The bed is a thin one of hair over a woven wire mattress, which makes the most luxurious soft couch, as provided in hospitals for weary, aching invalids. Over the hair bed is a rubber sheet to prevent the tick from being stained with medicine or dressings, over this an old blanket to keep the patient from chill of the rubber, and then the sheet. A set of thin, old blankets, and a

light coverlet, easily washed, are kept for sickness, and are thoroughly washed with carbolic acid in the water, and boiled, after each case of sickness. You don't want to spoil good blankets by washing them and scalding as often as hospital bedding requires. I learned this care the year we had diphtheria, scarlet fever, and chicken-pox, rheumatism with its poulticings, and a bad case of tumor with lancings and dressings, all in seven months. That is the sort of training life puts us through sometimes.

By such costly lessons I learned the safety of putting a patient as soon as he sickens in a separate room, for you never know at first just what an ailment may turn out. The chill with slightly sore throat which brings a child to the lounge in the sitting-room for a day or two, at the end of that time proves to be scarlatina, or the gray diphtheria patches appear, and then to the care of the sick one is added the anxiety of knowing that its hot breath has been sowing the seeds of the disorder among the rest of the household. In sickness, if nowhere else, a care in time saves nine. It often saves life.

Have the room airy, with two opposite windows

down at the top, and the bed out of the draft. It is better to have a fire in any weather when it is endurable, and keep windows open, for the draft carries away and consumes the bad air while drying and improving the fresh that it draws in. Keep the bed well out from the walls, so that air can circulate around it, and have, if possible, a lounge or small bed, in the same room so that the nurse need not lie down on the sick bed, which is not good for her or the patient either. An excellent old practice in infectious sickness is to burn sulphur in the room once or twice a day, sprinkling a teaspoonful on a hot shovel and carrying it around slowly that the fumes may fill all parts of it. It does the patient no harm, but rather much good to breathe it, if not strong enough to make him sneeze or choke, and inhaling sulphur fumes of moderate strength with open mouth kills the poison of diphtheria and ulcerated throats, while it greatly lessens the chance of other persons taking the disease.

A nurse should be very careful of her personal habits, bathe often, for her own refreshment and to keep her strength up, and wear fresh washable dresses,

that neither rustle nor crackle with starch. I have been so annoyed with well-meaning women who would take away my breath as they bent over me with odors of perspiration, and hair not kept with nicety, that seemed to smother the feeble strength left in me. And the chattering nurse who persists in talking a weak patient light-headed—is there any visitation to be compared with her in horror! Above all things learn to shun the art some people have of talking endlessly and saying nothing, mincing their subjects fine we may say. As I have heard a weakish personage of that sort go on, when she knew one was waiting hopelessly for rest and silence with a tired head, “I won’t disturb you, but I just thought I’d ask you so as not to have it to say again—very many people don’t like it so but I can’t know of course without asking you, and opinions vary so much you never can tell—now don’t say one word and exert yourself as you ought not to indeed—but *will* you have the window-shade down?” Don’t let your ideas flow through your tongue till it must tremble like the magnetic needle, and the senseless words utter themselves till the nervous patient nearly takes

leave of sense and sanity together. Learn how to talk in a sick-room. Don't talk loud or fast, in the chatter which young women imagine is conversation, say little at a time, three or four sentences, not more, and then rest, and don't expect answers. It diverts a sick person and soothes him to hear two other people talking fresh gossip when he is not expected to join, rather than be talked to himself, only the chat should not be long. O, it is with a long apprenticeship in sickness one's self one comes to know how light and sound and exertion affect an invalid, to learn what nervousness and weakness are, and how little things sometimes send the forces ebbing back to faintness and failure which had set hopefully toward health and safety.

As much depends on the food of your patient as on medicine. If one ever learns the right value of food and drink it is over a sick person, when the processes of strength and growth alter with a few spoonfuls more or less of the right kind of nourishment, and you feel the pulse sink under your finger for want of the draught of beef tea, or sip of wine and milk, which keeps the fluttering strength alive. Many a patient

in a fair way of recovery has been lost for want of good food to restore the lost vitality. You need to learn much to cater for the sick: to give fever patients lemons, acid jellies — not fruit jellies made with sugar — but gelatine flavored with wine and a breath of spice, little piquant soups, a few spoonfuls of which revive one so much and which the system absorbs as a sponge drinks water, almost, apple pulp scraped with a silver knife, or the juice from the ripest of strawberries, given drop by drop, together with barley water made in the good old way with lemon-juice and sugar candy, and calves-foot jelly, blandest and most blissful of foods. Nervous and weakly patients who need building up require strong broths without a drop of fat in them, savory roast chicken, game and such essence of meat as we get by putting five or six pounds of the neck or shoulder of beef in a stone jar, covering tight without one drop of water and baking in a moderate oven two hours. The jar will be found half-full of the richest gravy which is the very thing to build up nerves and brain. A cupful of this gravy heated scalding hot, with a fresh egg dropped in, and toasted oatmeal crackers,



is a very hearty meal for an invalid. But remember, food for a sick person must be of the freshest best quality, for anything stale or injured which a healthy system might get over will hopelessly derange a feeble one. Remember, also, that if half the care were given to the health of well people that we take to cure invalids, there would be very few sick. Humor the fancies of your patient all the doctor will allow. If there is a craving for any one thing in particular, whether it is roast chicken at midsummer when chickens are scarce, or oranges out of season, guava jelly or velvet cream or white grapes, get that very thing if you can, and say nothing about the trouble of getting it. That will worry all the pleasure out of a weak patient, when to gratify his taste may be the turning point to health. It is wholesome for people in this world to have their own way about their personal habits anyhow, sick or well, always provided it does not interfere too much with the comfort of others, and to the sick everything should give way. Lay this rule to heart.

It may seem hard to give up talking or singing in the near rooms because it worries Willie or your

mother, and I have heard well people pettishly protest against "giving in too far to the whims of sick people," and talking pretty loudly about the rights of healthy ones. I'm ashamed to say I have when younger said something of the sort myself. It was treated as very ridiculous by a party of summer visitors that a well-known authoress left her seaside house every night to get sleep at a lonely cottage away from all sounds. Bitter complaints were made of her sensitiveness when the fall of a hairbrush in a room overhead broke her uneven slumbers, and there was a good deal of spiteful criticism about "sheer nervousness," and "that sort of thing being a good deal cultivated." If those who are sound enough to go to bed and sleep every night, and pass unmoved by the sights and sounds of every day life, could once know the ordeal life becomes when night after night the brain is racked with waking till dawn, and the least stir spoils the chance of restoring sleep, and under such fatigue the nerves grow more and more acute till light, sound and conversation are misery—we would never hear any grumbling about sick people's fancies. I remember lying ill of brain fever

when only twelve years old, and too young to have fancies, when the creaking of a door, or any sharp sound, sent shoots of pain through my head that I could hardly bear. And the old rooster would persist in crowing shrilly just under my window, torturing me when too sick to make my pain understood, till the loving little brother of three years old guessed the trouble and put the Saracen to flight. Take all pictures out of the room where a sick person lies speechless or light-headed, for they torment the helpless brain with unheard-of images. A lady once told me of the suffering caused her by the family portraits in her room when she was lying, as her friends thought, unable to notice anything. The faces seemed to become distorted and leave their frames in shapes of horror to attack her, day after day, and she could make no one understand what ailed her. For this reason, avoid strange, bold-figured curtains and wall papers in a sick-room — better avoid all figured things, for the very blankness of walls and space rests a fevered brain, however dull to a well one.

Don't fuss around a sick person whom even well-

meant attentions worry. Even a bunch of flowers will sometimes "aggravate" one—in fact I think, from my own experience, a great deal too much is made of flowers and fancy attentions to sick people. I want a well-browned tender mutton chop, *sans* fat, gristle or bone, on a clean hot plate, without cracks or specks in the ware, a fresh napkin on the tray, and a thick, white towel to spread over the bedclothes to keep them from soil, some *good* bread, the best on earth is none too good for the sick, but no foolishness of flowers on the tray. Sick people don't want flowers and food together; the scent of the two doesn't combine well, and there may be insects on the leaves to get into the dishes. Bring the flowers in after the meal is all over, put them in sight in a vase, and say nothing about them till the patient's eye lights on them for himself. *Don't* put your hand on a sick person, even in the way of kindness, unless you are very intimate—the too familiar, frequent stroking of one's head is very annoying. In case of headache, ask if it would be agreeable to soothe it with your hands, and see that they are both cool and clean before you touch any one. A

warm, moist hand never ought to touch another person, sick or well. If your hands are apt to be moist, rub them with the fine soapstone powder used for gloves.

Study all the arts of comfort for the sick. Better is good nursing without medicine than medicine without good nursing. Cool a fevered patient by bathing him in very hot water, and then fanning him, which will relieve much more than using cold water at first. Or lay wet cloths on the wrists and back of the neck, and fan them, which will soon cool the whole body. Wet a hot head on the top and sides and fan it to reduce fever or rush of blood to the head. This last, together with nervous headache, is often better relieved by the use of very hot water than by cold. When one suffers from chill, put on a flannel nightgown and woollen stockings and drawers, then put hot soapstones to the spine and feet, give the patient something warm to hold in the hands, and cover with blankets next to the person, which will warm him sooner than you can possibly do in a cotton gown and sheets. Hospitals have hot water cushions of rubber for sick persons to hold

between their hands, but as water is sure to leak by nature, there is nothing so good for home heating as the old-fashioned soapstone slabs, of which every house ought to have a supply. Hot bricks are next best, because they hold a tempered heat a long time. Cover all compresses and poultices with warm dry flannel to keep the heat in, and be particular not to let the bedding remain wet when such things are in use, for the patient is easily chilled by damp clothing. Change sheets and blankets as often as the strength of a sick person will allow. It is not always necessary to wash them daily, but they and the nightgowns, can be hung in the sun, or thoroughly dried and heated by the fire, when they will be almost as sweet and fresh to put on as if newly washed. Hardly anything gives a patient more refreshment than the change from body clothes and bedding, charged with perspiration, smelling of poultices and lotions, to dry, sun-sweetened sheets and gowns. Night clothes and underclothes for the sick should never be made to slip over the head, but open all the way down for ease in changing; and where applications are to be made in the back, have everything

button both back and front, or turn the garment round. Much inconvenience to nurses and fatigue to the sick is saved by these simple devices.

The doctor will prescribe for Willie, but I will tell you a common thing to relieve the smarting and itching, not only of scarlet fever, but measles, erysipelas, and all kinds of poxes and rashes from those made by mosquito bites down. It is carbolated oil: fifteen drops of *strong* carbolic acid to six tablespoonfuls of sweet oil or almond oil. Any pure sweet fat will answer if you cannot get the oil, but the acid must be of strength sufficient to heal the smarting, and if too strong will make it worse. You must test it on your own skin in some tender spot, or on a patch of the eruption. It ought to relieve in a moment. If too strong, add more oil, drop by drop. This is a hospital remedy, and you need not be afraid of it. When too strong, relieve the smarting by a little fresh oil without acid. Rub this oil over the entire body wherever the eruption is seen, as often as the itching is felt. It not only heals, but lessens the chance of infection from the scales which it brings away at each bathing instead of leaving them to fall

off in the bedclothes the carpet, or to float in the air, dealing disease wherever they chance to light. Burn oil bottle and the cloths you rub it on with, when the child has no farther use for them, and never let an article of any sort he has used or worn be carried into another room. Put all soiled clothing, sheets and towels into a bag hung outside the window. No matter if it doesn't look very nice, it is better than giving the entire house a chance at the fever. When things are to be washed, lower the bag to the ground and if possible do the washing out of doors, boiling all linen and cotton things an hour in clean water to which strong disinfectants have been added. The room with all bedding and furniture is disinfected, when the physician pronounces it safe for the patient to go about, by closing doors and windows tight, spreading blankets, mats and clothing wide over chairs and railings in it, and fumigating. Have a shovel of hot coals placed where it will not set anything on fire in the room, sprinkle on two large handfuls of powdered sulphur, and leave the room shut up over night. You will want to leave all windows open wide all the next



day and the day after, if not for a week to get the sulphur smell out, but you will not have to dread that any one who enters risks taking the disease, for a year after. The fumigation is the same for all infectious diseases.

## XX.—IN THE STOREROOM.

IT is very well to buy your marketing day by day, the potatoes and carrots with the roast for the dinner, and the pears for dessert with the ice cream — if you like to see the money spent right and left as long as you don't pay the bills. But if your half dollar must go as far as your neighbor's three, or in other words if you have only one dollar to spend where you want five dollars' worth, you must study the keeping and buying of food. It will not make one particle of difference to your health and well-being at the end of the year whether your good beef, wheaten grits and plum pudding have cost forty dollars a week or ten or half that, but it will make all the difference between being delighted or discontented with your lot in life whether you have a little more or less money to gratify your tastes, and have a good picture or pretty room, or a pleasant visit to show

for your thinkings and savings. You need not fancy it beneath you to study the quality and price of food and to count every dollar of expenses three times over. Mr. Hope, the English connoisseur whose conservatories, gardens, picture-galleries and collections of gems were the admiration of all England, who entertained princes and dukes with an elegance which they could hardly return, was found by no means to have the enormous fortune supposed necessary for such style. He had attained all these luxuries and refinements by wisely spending moderate wealth, and he was so good a calculator that at his great dinners he knew the cost of every dish to a shilling, and kept his household expenses without the waste of sixpence. Lord Bulwer the novelist, an aristocrat and model of elegance living in what he considered a narrow way on \$15,000 a year, kept all his house accounts and knew to a pound how much coal, candle and provision his establishment used. The slightest waste was insufferable to him and he knew so well how to turn every guinea to its worth that he was never under money obligations to any one, and could send back the allowance his own mother made

him for the sake of sweet independence. It is only half-rate people who ignore cost and shrink from calculation. An intelligent woman carries her intelligence into everything, the corners of her pantry and the depths of her flour-barrels. You have no more right to cheat yourself out of the quality and quantity of good your income should yield than to cheat your neighbor.

Look to the weights and measures of what you buy. A pair of good scales is a great security, and a yard measure which you can buy for ten cents is another. I value scales and yardstick because they give good assurance that one is fairly dealt with. One who never measures carries an uneasy feeling that she is often taken advantage of, but when every doubtful parcel is weighed, one finds that the pound of Alderney butter looked small because it was more solid than common qualities are, and the suspicious steak being of closer grain weighed more than one of flabby texture and larger size. The comfort of knowing one is fairly dealt with is worth occasional trouble. All good dealers respect a customer who sees for herself to such matters. If anything is

wrong don't make a fuss about it; treat it as a mistake, and be as polite as you are firm in having it corrected. Too many shops will take advantage of a careless buyer while they deal correctly with one who demands her dues.

Bread is the first staple to be thought of, and your family of six persons ought to find two barrels of white flour, half a barrel of graham flour with fifty pounds of buckwheat and corn meal a liberal supply for one year. The time to buy bread stuffs is just before cold weather, laying in the barrel of flour at once, but the wheat meal and other things in smaller quantities because they spoil if kept too long. Perhaps you will prefer to change the proportions, and use twice as much wheat meal as flour. Mine comes from private hands where the wheat and milling are unsurpassed, and is put up in barrels lined throughout with paper, which keeps it better. Your grocer will line your barrels or half barrels with clean manilla wrapping paper if you ask him.

It is a mistake to think it needful to buy the highest brands of produce. Learn to judge by quality alone, and you will find that "new process" and

patent methods do not by any means imply the best article. Indeed experienced housekeepers are shy of buying things that are largely puffed and pressed upon them. In flour especially I have always doubted whether the highest-priced brands were worth more than some of the old sorts, and one of the best Boston dealers, belonging to the largest firm in the city supplying the best class of customers, gave his opinion lately that the best St. Louis flour was equal in good bread-making properties to any of the higher-priced kinds. Always feel doubtful of the abilities of a housekeeper who professes that she never can make bread with anything less than "Haxall" and "cold blast" flour. "St. Louis for pastry? No indeed — only the one brand for everything and that the best for me," said one lofty matron, who provoked a smile on the face of knowing ones, aware that the best bread flour makes a pastry almost impossible to roll out for toughness. Price is very little criterion of quality and fitness in provisions. You must learn to know what you buy from infallible signs of excellence, the creamy yellow tinge of good flour that takes the print of the skin when squeezed in the palm, the

fresh wholesome smell, the waxy firmness and unapproachable clear color of fine butter, without the suspicious pinky or deep yellow of artificial coloring, the clean bright look of fresh meats, whose quality a practiced buyer knows by a glance. Learn these things by sight and smell alone. Leave all prodding and handling to a lower grade of buyers. A delicate sense of smell is to be cultivated, and is a surer test than tasting.

For healthy living, that will ensure good complexions, freedom from headaches in general and support the strength you may use the brown bread which is common on the best English tables, and is served even with strawberries and ice cream at Belgravian lunches. The fairness of the Jersey Lily is due to such a diet through girlhood. See that the brown flour is free from black specks of cockle and buckwheat, and has not too much bran. What is sold for graham flour sometimes is only "canaille," or "middling" with common bran stirred in. In Boston we have the Arlington wheat meal, ground from wheat that is washed and very clean from other substances, and is about as coarse as corn meal. The Franklin

flour is whole wheat ground fine as white flour, and nice for cake or pastry. When you have eaten these well made from whole meal, the white flour tastes poor by comparison. But the mistake of modern dealers is in sending out everything ground too fine, by which the flavor is very soon lost. The fine corn flour does not make as nice muffins and bread as the old-fashioned meal of distinct grain, the buckwheat cakes are not good as they used to be, because the kernel is ground too fine and mixed with white flour beside, and so with rye flour which makes delicious drop cakes when eggs are plenty. If you want varied fare at small expense, you must provide largely of different grains in shape of meal, flour, grits and hominy, from fine to coarse. Oat meal makes puddings as savory as rice of the same recipes, and so does pearl hominy. They are delicate also as fritters and breakfast cakes. Just wait till I rummage out aunt Jane's private stock of recipes that have been tried for a generation, if you want to know what good American living really is like, in flavor and variety.

Butter with our bread is the next necessary, and you may congratulate yourself on living in a country



where both are plenty. The English breakfast and tea where thin slips of toast figure with the scared looking pat of butter would make one of our households blush for shame. "Butter, like religion," my old dairy woman used to say, "is a matter every person must decide for himself." Not one person out of five hundred butter-makers knows how it ought to be made. The cream never should sour before churning, it should be kept in a cool airy place, away from other food, never shut in tight jars or cans, where it changes in a short time so as to be wholly unfit for use, it should be quickly churned, the butter worked free from every particle of milk without washing it or touching with the hands, and put down with the whitest salt, sugar and saltpetre, in small five-pound boxes for summer and fifty-pound firkins for winter use. Your care after buying your large tub of butter is to keep it in a clean, cool airy place, away from dust and all strong smelling things, like fish or cheese, and keep it closely covered. Once a week take out enough for use in a small jar, for it ruins butter to open a firkin daily.

Five pounds each of rice, sago, and tapioca will be

found ample for a month's supply if not more. Keep them in glass jars with screw tops, if you want your storeroom to look neat and things in the best condition. Cornstarch, arrowroot, sea moss farina and all such fine food should be kept in glass and not left to stand in papers till used up. How much food is impaired by standing open, or by insects dropping in, or other things spilling in, nobody guesses. But one sees on one shelf the cornstarch package, the paper of raisins, the open sugar pail and on the upper one the box of paris green, the insect powder and silver polish ready to be spilt by marauding mouse or hasty hand, and a feeling of security is not the result. Keep all injurious articles out of your storeroom and food closets. Don't take any chances with them.

Canned food is so largely used that it seems treason to the convenience of the housekeeper to hint that there are better ways of keeping fruits and vegetables. Keep all tin cans in a cold place, all glass ones in a cold and dark one, for light injures things put up in glass as every woman knows. As soon as a tin can is opened pour the contents

into a dish, for more harm is done by leaving tomatoes or acid fruit in metal after opening than by long keeping when sealed. If the inside of the can is corroded with crystallized films, it is safe not to use what is in it. All canned goods in glass or tin should be used as soon as possible after opening, for exposure to the air works rapid change in them. At least cook or scald them right away.

If more care were given to keeping ripe fruit in its natural state, half the labor of canning might be saved, and we could have not only barreled apples but pears and grapes till March or later. It is a great deal less work to buy nice sound fruit, wrap it in paper and pack in bran, moss or soft paper in tight boxes—to stand in some cold place where they only will not freeze. Aunt Jane regularly put away the choice bunches from her Isabella grape-vine in this way for twenty years, and never failed of having them for dessert till the first rhubarb came round in spring. If you can engage some farmer to gather fruit on the twig for you, leaving the stem attached without bruising, it will be very sure to keep. Paper barrels are safe things for storing fruit, expensive at first, but

lasting and worth all they cost for their keeping properties.

Dried fruit is worth more attention than it receives since canned goods have crowded it out of use. But the shrewd housekeeper will advise you not to choose the nice, white thinly cut evaporated apples and peaches, which being cut so thin have lost all richness of flavor and likeness to fruit. Rather take the old-fashioned kind quartered and dried in the sun, for the large pieces not only keep flesh and flavor but the sun sweetens them, turning their juice to grape sugar in process of drying which is a kind of after ripening. Dried cherries with stones in are richer than pitted ones — and so with plums. Don't, whatever folly you may commit, be persuaded to keep fruit with preserving powder. It may keep, but its being fit to eat is another thing. Twelve jars of the finest Jocunda strawberries which I was induced to put up with fruit powder have just been put down on the compost heap, after giving every one who tasted them an unhappy evening, with furred teeth, drawn tongue, and sundry aches. And aunt Jane sits by and *never* says, "I told you so," in the

most aggravating Christian fashion! She believes in old-fashioned dried fruit, jams and pound for pound preserves, and after this so do I.

I do not think that the adulteration of food in the better qualities is so common as it used to be, perhaps, and shrewd buyers can depend on getting good material if they know how to use it afterward. Object to very blue-white cut sugar, which has indigo in it if nothing worse, and powdered sugar which will not dissolve wholly in hot water and leave it clear, for that is mixed with white earth. Syrup with fine bubbles in it is fermenting and not good; if very thick and not too clear suspect glucose, which is not dangerous but still is not cane syrup which we have a right to expect. Beware of dark or yellowish condensed milk, or such as leaves any sediment. No one used to good food can fail to detect the unnatural cast and flavor of mixed food.

Perhaps nothing is more deteriorated than ground coffee. So do not waste your money on gayly put up cans of Imperial Breakfast Coffee or any other fancy name, but buy a ten-cent coffee mill, order the roasted berry and grind it as you may make the coffee. If

you want a mixed coffee very pleasant to drink, buy a pound of dandelion coffee, and put a tablespoonful in the coffee-pot mornings. It is safe, healthy, and many persons like the sweet rich flavor it gives better than pure coffee.

If possible buy cider vinegar by the barrel for it grows better by keeping. Kerosene is enough cheaper by the barrel to make it good economy to order it in quantity. *Heat* a spoonful and see if it takes fire readily when a match is held to it. Pratt's Astral oil is the standard, and so refined that it burns without smoke or smell, gives more brilliant light and burns longer in kerosene stoves, beside being the safest oil known, and well worth the higher cost. The inferior oils are poor economy. Keep your lamps and oilcans or barrel in the coldest place possible, never in the sun or in a hot room, for heat raises an inflammable vapor from the best of oils which may take fire by accident. Of course you will not keep oils where food of any sort is stored.

## XXI.—PLANNING AND PACKING.

THE Lawrence girls have sent over to ask if you will be so kind as to spend the day with them and help in their packing scrape. For Julia is going with her aunt to Mount Desert, and Helen and Florence have just been asked to join the Farwells who start with the Raymond Excursion, Thursday, for California. When I was sixteen it would not have been possible for a woman and three girls to go off travelling where they pleased without an escort of their own family. When aunt Syra and Mary Bates were engaged as teachers in the Female College at Steubenville, next to Wheeling on the Ohio, they had to wait three months till Doctor Beattie, the principal, could come all the way to Boston and back on purpose for them, it was so highly indecorous and unheard of for ladies to leave home without an escort. Mrs. Lyle, the rich banker's widow, wanted to see Niagara

twenty years before she could find a chance to go from Towanda in care of relatives as she thought proper, and then while she was taking three weeks to get ready, she took neuralgia in her head, and never got away from home before the erysipelas set in which ended her uneventful life. And you know how the Van Allen girls and their mother stayed at home summer and winter all their lives in the big square house with the tulip borders, because they had no brother to take them anywhere and the father was dead. Now, in care of a Raymond party, the mother and girls, or the single lady who boards, or the young schoolteacher can go from Boston or Chicago to San Francisco, or the Willamette, in as scrupulous escort as their own uncles might be, and much more experienced in the ways of travel. It is like travelling *en prince*, with the best cars and special trains, every detail of baggage, dinners, carriages and hotels provided without care, and courteous cultivated gentlemen in charge, keeping ceaseless watch over the comfort of the whole large party. I am glad the mother or the aunt, and the girls need not stay at home alone any more, but can buy courtesy and care with a round



ticket, and go to see the world as gayly and safely as their brothers and sons do. You may count on a good time if you will make preparation with the same foresight and system which the admirable manager of the route uses in caring for his party four months ahead. Let an old tourist who has taken the journey by excursion and in private party, and who never counts on more than a day's warning to go to the end of the world, help your girls' memories over the bags and trunks.

A well furnished trunk really packs itself, its trays, bonnet boxes, tills and tapes suggesting their peculiar uses; but all trunks are not so well provided. Never mind. The old one is solidly built, and the joiner can send two light trays with tapes crossing to hold the contents, and nail cleats for them to rest on. A stout pasteboard box, lined with the glazed linen known in tailors' findings, makes a good bonnet box lighter than the French milliners' boxes of wood, and lightness is everything when every pound over the regulation hundred weight is charged for. In event of a smash the wooden box goes to pieces anyhow and the pasteboard one can't do more. Put in the bonnet

crown down, and fill it with all sorts of light things, laying an open handkerchief first. Fancy work, and materials, fichus, lisle stockings, folded ribbons, all go in and help keep the shape of the bonnet, which must be tied in by four cross strings of tape attached to the sides of the box just above the bonnet brim. Veils and kerchiefs may fill the corners without crushing the trimming, for a bonnet goes safest in a full box. When you unpack, take the handkerchief out by its four corners, with the contents, and the bonnet is free at once. Helen will want it at Manitou anyhow, where one goes to chapel in the shadow of Pike's Peak. Laces, collars, and cuffs go not in boxes, but in those pretty "portfolios" of quilted silk or satin, which lie so smooth and take little room. Boxes, except for spools and buttons, must be tabooed where space is precious. A travelling work-basket of paste-board covered with chintz, to lie flat when packed, is the suitable thing; so is a thread bag with casings for spools, and skeins, a slipper and shoe-bag, and a collapsible one of enameled cloth for soiled clothes, that will not let them scent the trunk. All provided! Very well. Lay out all that is to go, in orderly piles

on the bed, have the trunk close by and a low seat between the two, so that you need not make drudgery of it, for packing and stooping over trunks is very tiresome work to people conscious of having spines in their backs. Don't omit the large sheet of fresh wrapping paper in the bottom of the trunk to catch the dust which works in, somehow. The heaviest things go in first, and these are books.

A pocket dictionary, Bible, hand-books of botany and geology as you like, a scrap-book, or rather a portfolio for all the odds and ends of photographs, clippings, leaves, that keep the memories of a tour, will be the essentials of your library. Perhaps you will want Shakespeare and a poet or two beside, but on a pleasure journey it is surprising how little time there is for reading. You will want some good stories to rest your mind when tired with sight-seeing and novelty, but half a dozen "Franklin Squares" strapped with your hand luggage are enough, for you can buy novels anywhere. Take plenty of stationery, for you can't buy linen note paper at twenty-five cents a pound west of the Mississippi, also take small wares to last till you are home again, for the little things we

buy for five cents — spools of silk, linen buttons and boot-buttons, elastic, hair nets, and such — mount up to the inevitable “two bits” or twenty-five cents once you are out of Chicago.

I give you one lady's list of inevitables for the overland tour, expected to last three or four months :

Three papers of crimping pins, five of hairpins, five invisible front nets, five hair nets, five yards elastic cord, three papers of pins, three spools black sewing silk, six spools sewing cotton, the same of mending cotton, two dozen boot buttons, one half dozen tape, two dozen linen and pearl buttons, skein linen thread for boot buttons, wax, three ounces vaseline, the same of carbonate of ammonia, dry, one ounce gum tragacanth (for mucilage and bandoline) four ounces gum camphor, one ounce permanganate of potash, the same of *pure* carbolic acid, the same of citric acid, one half dozen of toilet soap, one half pound powdered borax, two bottles lavender water, one bottle shoe dressing, one box ink-powder, one of elastic letter bands, one of mouth glue, two pounds thin note paper, envelopes half as many, one half dozen pencils, two small boxes pens.

This looks like an odd mixture but it is all wanted. The ammonia and borax are to soften the hard water on the Plains for washing hands, the permanganate of potash dissolved in water will soften the skin, heal eruptions and neutralize bad odors, which I grieve to say are too often found about the bedrooms of first-class hotels, or what pretend to be such. You cannot always get lemons, and a tiny crystal of citric acid in a glass of water will give you a morning lemonade which will keep off the biliousness which steals over one in the long journey with its changes of water and food. Of course it is troublesome to take care of one's self, but it is also vexing to be left at the hotel with a tearing headache while all the rest are going up Cheyenne Canyon, or to find yourself half blind with malaria when you want to be enjoying yourself between the orange groves and the drives at Los Angeles. Of all wretched things, to be sick on a pleasure journey is the most out of place and unhappy.

The small medicine case, the toilet water, ammonia etc., belong in the travelling bag, where also you want note-book, pencils, knife, sketching block and herbal,

if you use them, writing tablet with a quire of paper, envelopes and stamps ready, envelopes directed and stamped, beforehand, for writing letters is a hurried business on a journey, and a direction ready may save a post when one is short of time. Have a bottle of shoe polish put up in the bag, for it is good for many things beside shoes. That, the bandoline, and lavender must be carried in a wadded case like an exaggerated spool bag, to prevent breaking, unless you have the olive wood boxes with screw tops which hold bottles so safely, else a deluge of blacking or ink over one's handkerchiefs is the least to be looked for. Don't forget a small bottle of chloroform liniment, invaluable if toothache, earache or any stray neuralgia comes on. Ask your doctor for the recipe, and never go on a journey without a bottle of it. And Jamaica ginger is a very useful travelling companion that one is sorry to be without.

Better carry your case of bottles forty years and not need it than to be found once without when you want it. A packet of chocolate in some shape, acid drops and fine crackers may well be taken, for distances are long between meals on the overland routes,

and I have seen—in a “wash out”—a train of Pullman passengers on a Pacific railroad wolfish with hunger, going thirty hours between two eating stations two hundred and fifty miles apart, with the Rocky Mountain range between, and not a stale cracker or stick of candy to be bought on the dreary route. Accidents will happen, and delays are not uncommon, wherefore you will prepare for them like a wise traveller, with plenty of wraps, and at least a day's supply of Albert biscuit, graham wafers, lime drops, sweet chocolate, almonds and raisins, for you get more nourishment in small compass in such things than from a basketful of the inevitable chicken and cake. Have your lunch done up in oiled paper which is strong, neat and takes less room than box or basket. Beside things named, the large travelling bag should hold a print wrapper for sleeping and dressing gown on the train, collars, cuffs and handkerchiefs, two or three pairs of stockings, toilet towels, some with tapes to tie over pillows and give your cheek something nicer than railroad or hotel pillow cases to lie on; slippers, hood, or soft hat, and loose wrap to wear on the cars, for riding all day in walking

dress, bonnet and boots makes a journey more tiresome than necessary.

Old travellers who spend this month on the Pacific coast, the next in the Riviera and the next in the Hebrides, and go knocking about the four quarters of the globe, hardly wait to enter a train till they are in *négligé* as far as propriety allows. I wouldn't quite recommend the style of the English bishop's lady who went with us from Omaha to Colfax, in morning jacket and quilted petticoat, though it was a very nice black satin petticoat and probably quite the proper thing in British eyes. If comfortably dressed to begin, it is surprising how little luggage one needs on the cars. A small valise, with waterproof, shawl and books strapped on the outside, ought to carry all that one lady needs outside of her trunk between Chicago and San Francisco. Dress lightly with thin flannels, for the cars are warm even on the snowy mountain tops, and your cloak and shawl will be all that is needed on the way.

I like to pack the travelling bag early, before the trunks are done, and have it off my mind. Left to the last, one gets tired, and things are forgotten, or



crowded like a pedler's pack. That done and laid aside with travelling dress and cloak, one can give one's mind to the trunks. Books and underclothing go in first, then the dresses in trays, with parasol, bonnet box and small things wedged as closely as you can get them on the top. To have things go smoothly and safely, learn to pack firmly, so that nothing can be shaken about. All nice dresses should go in wide shallow boxes, or be pinned in soft paper or thin towels, to prevent injury. See that all flounces and pleatings lie smooth, and that waists and sleeves lie flat, folded only in their seams. It was easy to give rules for folding dresses when they were made with plain straight skirts, and you had only to divide the skirt into four equal parts, and lay it smooth, but no such thing is possible with polonaises and puffed overskirts. Fold in the seams and across the middle of puffs is all that a dressmaker can tell you. Lay things smoothly with no turning up at the sides of the trunk. If a dress or skirt doesn't fit in, take it out and fold it smaller. If the trunk is too large to be filled snugly, make the compartments smaller by thin partitions of wood tightly wedged in. If your

things only half fill the trunk, pack that half as closely as it will hold, and leave trays empty and nailed down to keep the rest in place. The moving about of lightly packed things ruins boxes and dresses together.

Wrap nice books and boxes in towels or thin paper to keep them from rubbing against the sides. Trinkets, or china, should be wrapped in plenty of tissue paper and wedged into ribbon boxes, rolled in towels and tucked among clothes where they touch nothing solid. Lay framed pictures glass down, between layers of clothing. Carvings ought to have separate boxes, and lie bedded in tissue paper, or sheets of wool wadding.

Silk in the piece should never be folded, you know, because it will crack in the creases. Roll it round a paper core, and wrap it in a soft towel or square of thin cotton. Any fabric keeps better in rolls than folded flat. Nice ribbons keep their color best wrapped in thin manila paper, with oiled paper outside, such as caramels are kept in. If you were going to Japan, or the Sandwich Islands, which are the next stage from California, you would want a set of tin

boxes, and stout pasteboard ones, lined with thick oiled paper to keep everything in — gloves, ribbons, shoes, silks, cambrics, or the damp would be sure to spoil them.

Just fancy keeping all your finery in tin cake boxes !

Finish by leaving the things you are likely to need first at the top of different compartments, so that you can lay hands on them without going to the depths of the strata. See that all buckles, straps and hinges are in order, before the canvas cover is drawn on the trunk, and have a stout strap outside of all, riveted on so that it cannot be stolen from baggage rooms, by knavish porters. Have your initials distinct and clear in black paint, but it is not desirable to have one's full name and address. Pack the little rubber or crash dressing case, a medicine vial or two, handkerchiefs, one small towel, a vinaigrette, notebook, pencil and knife in your small handbag, with the red Russia leather book of coupons for the journey, and bon voyage, girls !

This is pretty, to leave you, Anna Maria, a note of thanks on the way to the depot, with tickets for a

White Mountain tour in July under the Raymond escort. The next thing will be a dress rehearsal, over your wardrobe for the occasion, and I'm coming over like a fairy godmother, with my thimble in my pocket, and a needle for a wand.

## XXII.—A DRESS REHEARSAL.

**O**F course the spring sewing must be done before you can go away for the season. Never stop to wish for somebody else's purse as long as you have a few dollars in your own, and wits to make them go as far as possible. Suppose we look over the boys' clothes and get them off your mind before we settle to your dresses. Things have an air of being at the end of the season, but they must last a few weeks till milder weather.

The worst of boys' clothes is that being mostly woollen they absorb dust and odors to that degree aunt Jane declares she can smell a boy across the room by his fusty jacket. Every closet ought to have a window; but as every closet does not, all the boys' suits should have a thorough airing once a week. On a sunny day, at aunt Jane's, you will see the back porch strung with lines of trousers and jack-

ets turned inside out, and swinging in the wind from breakfast time till four in the afternoon. First they are whipped and shaken till the dust is out, grease and mud stains taken out with a stiff manila scrubbing-brush, hot water and soap, any part of the lining that is soiled is scrubbed in the same way, rinsed in many waters—sometimes aunt Jane says it takes a dip in very weak copperas water to cleanse and sweeten them to suit her—sun and wind all day doing the rest. Then the closets have the floors washed often, and the doors left wide open every day, while the rooms are airing, and by this care that immaculate woman keeps her boys' wardrobe as neat and sweet as any girl's. One rule is that no boots and shoes are kept in closets with clothing, for leather and woollen suits together get up a smell of their own, that is to say the least, extraordinary. For one thing the boys never wear their boots or thick shoes upstairs, or in a carpeted room. As soon as they come home the boots are taken off in the little dressing-room off the entry, put on the back porch to be cleaned if they need it, and then all go in the boot closet downstairs, while the boys wear slippers or low

shoes about the house. It was some trouble to make them understand they were not to come stalking into the sitting-room in rubber boots or walking shoes, but the noise, dust and wear of carpets saved by it would make any woman's heart glad. The boys pretend their mother copies Turkish manners and would like to have them leave their shoes outside, like the Turks at the door of a mosque, but they find stout shoes last longer for being kept to their own particular uses, and carpets certainly wear better when not ground by half inch soles.

How baggy at knees, and wrinkled at elbows the suits are, when schoolboys have nearly gone through them. . To prevent this, every Saturday night, after they have been brushed, dampen the knees of the trousers and press them with a heavy iron, or leave them all night under a smooth board and heavy weight, the way soldiers keep their uniforms smooth. When a jacket is worn rough, lay it on a table, scrub with a stiff brush, hot water and soap, using as little water as possible, rub with a dry crash towel, put a thin cloth over, and press the garment well. A shabby coat often comes out as good as new from

this treatment. Coats must not be hung by the loop on the collar for any length of time, but be put away on the wire shoulder forms which cost ten cents apiece. Trousers and vests should be laid away in press, to keep them in shape.

Always in the spring, after beating, cleaning and a grand airing, take the woollen clothes in while the sun is on them, and put away, with as little folding as possible in large chests, lined with thick paper, and plenty of gum camphor in rather large pieces among the layers. I hope to see the large wooden chests for storage form part of our outfits as they were of our grandmothers'. Boxes are much better to keep clothes in than leather trunks are, and a set made of cedar, or lined with veneers of that wood, built very large to receive clothes without much folding would be better than cedar closets, especially if there is a dry attic to store them. One chest for blankets, one for men's clothing, and one for women's, should be part of the family plenishing, and descend as heirlooms after the sensible custom of our ancestors. Furs keep best in the new barrels made from paper pulp, which can be sealed up to



wholly exclude moths. If you must store them without any such convenience, beat them thoroughly on the inside, brush the fur well, put into a clean large paper bag which you get from the grocers, with lumps of camphor in the pockets and folds, and paste the top of the bag closely. Keep each article, so sealed in a separate bag, in a box or trunk, lined with camphorated or tarred paper, and paste strips over the keyhole and closure of the trunk. This work should always be done as soon as you are through wearing furs and woollens. Moths seldom attack things in constant use, but seize their chance if articles are left in closet or trunk for a fortnight unguarded. Don't leave your winter dresses and the boys' clothes hanging in unused closets or the attic, half the summer. Beside moths, the ants, wasps and flies will gnaw holes in them, dust gathers, and light fades them. The waste of clothes comes nearly as much from neglect as from use.

I know, of course, that girls like to run through dresses and have new ones, but to dress well on the limited means, old things must be kept in succession, and tenderly cared for. I have just been help-

ing a young lady look over her wardrobe, who has been in straitened circumstances since the war. It is a sad instance of the way people can come down from a brownstone house in the fashionable part of New York, a house where the window curtains were three hundred dollars a pair, the conservatory and aviary cost enough for you or me to live on, and my young lady's school dresses were forty and fifty dollars apiece — enough to buy a dress for a court ball, as ladies who have lived much abroad will tell you. First came embarrassment, then a crash in business, the fine house and furniture were sold at auction, the parents died in the struggle with narrow means, and my brave young lady took a place as governess. But as if harm could not leave her without its utmost spite, the little bank stock she had left was lost, and on the heels of this ill-fortune, in a crush at a city shop one day, her handsome cloak, a relic of old times, was cut in three or four places, and her dress pocket picked of the last money she had in the world. This befell just as failure of their income obliged the family she had been with for years, to dispense with governess and ser-

vants. Don't say these things never happen outside of stories. They never happen in stories half so sadly as they do in real life as you will know when you read more in that deep volume. This happened in the winter of 1884. But this young lady, taught as well-bred girls are to take care of things, has been able to dress well for ten years without spending twenty-five dollars a year on her clothes, by making clever use of her own and her mother's old wardrobe. Such a marvel of thrift I never saw, and I wish women could take lessons of this sorely tried girl, how to make the most of what they have. White stockings are out of use, you know, but Emma, having a stock of fine balbriggans, colors them pale blue and pink to correspond with summer dresses, dipping some in dye made of deep bluing water, set with alum, and others in pink dye extracted by boiling scraps of crimson cotton flannel. Fast as the well-darned feet wear out, new ones are deftly made from the stronger parts of old pairs, and these are not bungled, but so carefully joined that it is rather a pleasure to one fond of nice needlework to see them. Her white silk lace turns yellow with

wear past restoring — she does not throw it away, but treats it to a dip in the same bath with her stockings, and has ruffles of pretty pink and blue blonde to trim cravats and fichus. She buys a silk kerchief in tasteful color for twenty-five cents, and embroiders a large initial in the corner for a stylish bit of neckwear, but she doesn't go to the expense of having it stamped, or buying embroidery silks at five cents a needleful. She dampens the corner of the kerchief, and irons it over the embossed initial on another handkerchief laid on flannel, and the letter is transferred in relief, to be penciled over with ease. Odds and ends of silk are raveled, scalded to set the color, or dipped to get the shade wanted, and skill does the rest. You never see neater embroidery than Emma does with such materials. I am given to contrivance myself, but my poor thrift was left far behind by hers. Fancy ripping out the chain stitch embroidery on a linen suit, and keeping the thread to darn merino hosiery: Her black velvet jacket first was worn as a broad rose-colored sash at one of Mrs. Lincoln's receptions, when Emma was in the nursery! It has been successively part of a

dress flounce, and a table scarf, but being originally very good velvet, it bids fair to outlast several dyeings and piecings yet. The best of it is that Emma is such a perfect mistress in the art of making over that her work has not the poverty-stricken air of most pieced and furbished things. This is an art worth learning and learning well.

Like a nice girl you always wear a thin under kerchief or high corset cover to take the soil from the skin, instead of disgracing the neck of your dress linings. And you find it not too much trouble to wear arm shields in the sleeves, for these contrivances not only insure neatness but keep a dress from the most destructive wear. There is an acid in perspiration which makes the fibre of fabrics decay, as surely as the black dye in cloth. But instead of buying shields, you will find it better to make them of thin cambric, brushed with sweet oil and paraffine wax, and dried over a hot stove. Waxed paper makes good shields, that stand more wear than any one would suppose, and being very thin take less room in dresses. Then you are careful to shake and brush a dress well before hanging

it away after wearing it. It improves all dresses to turn them inside out and hang them out-of-doors for several hours after wearing. They keep a freshness that is pleasant, and this freshness preserves a dress, for stale air, dust and secretions from the person all subtly injure colors and fabrics in time. Be careful what kind of brushes you take to different materials. Stiff brushes wear out things fast, and the best way is to take care that dresses get little mud or soil to need harsh treatment. After the grass is green, the best and easiest way to brush all dresses from lawn to cashmere and silk, is to take them to a piece of clean sward, and beat the skirt back and forth, letting it sweep the sod at each stroke. The grass acts as a fine, soft brush, that does not fray any fabric, and the work is done in much shorter time than by a clothes brush. Grena-  
dines and fine pleated lawns are refreshed in this way better than any other. Silk and satin should have a whisk of long, soft hair. Velvet should always have the dust wiped off with a piece of black crape, before putting away. It will grow rusty much sooner if not kept free from dust. Vel-

vet jackets, cloaks and dresses should not be folded in drawers, but hung by many loops in roomy wardrobes, where they cannot wrinkle or be crushed.

Now what to do about these dresses for the season. You have been thinking whether it is best to make things over, or buy a few new ones and spare the time and trouble of re-making. That depends. If you were a very busy person with more profitable employment for your time, it would be better to buy one or two new gowns, and let the old ones go. But you see, you have more time and skill than money, and you should spend of what you have most. A little money put into nice trimmings and fancy things with an old gown gives a better effect than a plain new dress. Then fashion helps us out with pretty contrivances. Your blue plaid gingham needn't be thrown aside because the waist won't meet in front. Cut off buttons and buttonhole edges, and fill the space with a puffed and shirred shirt or guimpe as it is called, (pronounced gâmp). Get a dressmaker to come one day, to fit and baste all these things, and then another day to finish off when you have done the sewing. The buff dress that

was ruined with acid as you think, is not past help, for you can set in new pieces with the sewing machine mind, not by hand, and cover the places with broad trimming of the new heavy linen torchon, that is durable as Irish crochet. Do all piecing with the machine, which makes a more even join than the nicest hand sewing, use fine thread and press the seams open. I believe anything can be done with dresses, since hearing of Mrs. Governor William Smith's claret silk that was spoiled by lemonade, but had thirty pieces set in the body and flounces so cleverly that no one seeing it is the wiser. Mrs. Governor William Smith's devices, or those of her clever little dressmaker for her, were staple reminiscences of my girlhood when Aunt Paulina Trescott came to do our family sewing. Wasn't an India shawl caught in the carriage door and torn zigzag in a heartrending way, and didn't Miss Trescott take a week darning it with the fringes so beautifully that Mrs. Governor Smith always pointed out the spots to particular friends with affectionate pride? I wonder if that shawl is in existence yet? It ought to be.



Nothing is the matter with your flannel suit save the Hercules braid is rusty. You can rip it off and have it dyed, or you can take a shorter way, by going over it with a toothbrush and liquid shoe-blackening. Let me tell you "Brown's" or anybody else's polish has a great many uses besides being good for shoes. Your black straw turban looks dusty and faded. Brush it well and give it two coats of polish, letting it dry between, and you wouldn't know but it had come from the milliner's. That little soft black felt hat would be useful in riding, if it were not gray with wear; sponge it with the polish. It won't look glossy, but the black will be revived. The boys' hats which turn greenish, and the hat bindings are improved by such a dressing, and your old rubber cloak and sandals can be made shining and new with a coat of it. I never knew of its injuring any fabric. There is vitriol in shoe-polish true, but so there is in many black dyes for woollen goods. When you mend black kid gloves, always go over the seams outside with a little blackening, and they will look neater.

Never give up black lace, or indeed lace of any

kind till it is in fragments. When merely crumpled, wind it tightly and smoothly on anything hard and round, a broomstick, the long handle of a tin dipper or a bottle, and leave it fifteen minutes in hot steam over a kettle of boiling water, which will smooth it and revive the color. When aged and gray, it is time to re-dye it, and all your faded white silk laces with it. Yak lace can be dyed a dozen times and look as well as ever. White thread and cotton laces can be dipped in weak coffee, or tinged with bluing, or a dash of pink dye as you like, or you can paint dots of bright color on the figures with pigments mixed in clear varnish with Chinese white.

You want a wrap for riding. Take the faded Paisley shawl, that has been out of use ten years, and have it dipped in chloride of lime to discharge all the color, only a moment or two or your shawl will dissolve into rags, then rinse in five waters and have it colored pretty light blue, pink, or coffee brown. Not that you are to undertake this yourself, unless you have an Aunt Jane skilled in dyes to help you. All black and dark woollens or silks can be re-dyed black, light wools may take fancy shades, a little

deeper than the original color, and many trimmings bear dyeing well. Dyeing and embroidery are the two resources of a slender wardrobe — for what can't be dyed, my dear, may be improved by quilting, braiding or powdering with brilliant dots or sprigs of needlework.

### XXIII.—CHURCH PICNICS.

**S**O you are on the committee to supply refreshments for the festival to which the Sunday-school looks forward. A good report of your housekeeping at home will certainly bring you into demand this way.

Nowadays, every woman is likely to be brought into semi-public duty of some sort, in the host of temperance, church and Sunday-school festivals, charity fairs and suppers, soldiers' lunches and school reunions, so it must be part of your education to know how such things should go off.

Like everything else in this world, this refreshment business is best begun pencil in hand, so that at every step you may know just where you are. For each hundred persons who attend the picnic, or the excursion, which is the name for the old "Sunday-school celebration," your committee must secure a certain amount of food, which the families of the congregation

agree to provide. Experienced housekeepers know pretty well how much a given number of hungry people will eat, and your Sunday-school friends should find a liberal supply, for no church should ever bear the reproach of stingy doings in its festivals. The first injunction ever given for such matters and the only one needed, should hang in every vestry and committee room, and every Christian take it to heart: "*Let everything be done decently* (that is respectably, or handsomely, as the Greek would be rendered to-day in our own phrase) *and in order;*" that is systematically, which I grieve to say is not the case with too many church social affairs. The providing is left to an unexperienced young lady committee who don't see all the families in time to allow for preparation, and who leave each person to bring what seems good or convenient. The consequence is, a surfeit of cake, but only half enough sandwiches, and those of a hasty lunch-counter variety, four dozen loaves of gold cake and bushels of doughnuts, but not crisp cookies enough to go around, or half enough lemonade. People eat more cake than agrees with them, and have headaches and feel faint before they go home for want of relishing

and right food. The bolder children are stuffed till an after-course of jalap and senna would be highly proper, while the timid ones go hungry on a slice of cake and half a roll, and too many of those who attend go home feeling as if they never wanted to go to a Sunday-school picnic again. Now a leisure day in the woods, or on the seashore, with fresh air and change of scene, as well as change of food, ought to leave people with fresher, better feelings, and it is sheer waste of time, efforts and parish cake, if you don't send them home the better for coming. At least see to it that your part of the entertainment is well done, for the most fastidious are apt to go home satisfied if they have had something good to eat. The credit of the church depends on your way of taking up a duty, which too many persons slight, and very few understand. Please to understand that the object of the picnic, or wood-party, or excursion, as you choose to call it, is not to give one because other churches do, or to raise a few dollars for the library, or a church stereopticon, nor yet to draw scholars to your Sunday-school. None of these; but it is the reminder of the Jewish feast of tabernacles, the day of gladness in open air and sun-

shine, in rest from toil, and friendly gayety, in light feasting, which stores up strength for the resting frames to take to the daily work of the next weeks. Yes, you may smile, but the underlying fact of all our social feasting, the reason why all our holidays and rejoicings are celebrated with richer and more varied eating, is that in the repose of muscle and lightness of spirits, the body can digest and accumulate a little surplus of strength to meet the wear of life again. As the good dinner Victor Hugo gave poor children once a week kept up their health in spite of every day privations, so every holiday ought to freshen us for the stress of work and business. It is a failure if it does not do this, and if our parish festivals do not come up to the mark, it is time they should.

And first, see that your party have enough to eat. As you wish to provide liberally every hundred who come will need the following amount, the same or in kind : Either one hundred and fifty sandwich rolls, or eight large loaves of home-made bread made into sandwiches ; if made as they should be, most of your party will prefer these to sweet things, excepting only the juvenile cake-sharks. The bread should be baked only

the day before, cut very thin, not buttered, but spread with beef or ham, chopped fine as if grated, and mixed with salad dressing. The sliced sandwich is not easy to manage neatly without plate, knife and fork. If rolls are sent, part of the inside should be scooped out and filled with the sandwich mixture.

If cold meats are to be served, your hundred will call for two small hams, or twenty-five pounds beef, five cold tongues sliced thin, and a dozen large chickens. Salad is relished by everybody, and is not expensive, as veal and lamb may be mixed with chicken, while fresh chopped cabbage, beets, hard eggs, parsley and a dozen other ingredients may combine with the celery and lettuce. Salmon salad, or fresh white fish salad, will give variety, and, in serving, salad only calls for saucers and spoons like ice cream. If you want to manage with least trouble and risk, instead of borrowing the plates and silver of the entire parish, let the committee order a gross of wooden plates and saucers, which come at a good deal less than a cent apiece, and will last a number of picnics. With paper napkins in plenty, things are more civilized, and you will find a load of care off your mind in borrowing and returning



things. If anybody desires better, it is open for them to bring their own napkins, fork and spoon as used to be the custom of good society at all feasts only two hundred years ago.

As long as the great American picnic-goer likes pickles, you may as well provide them, for the relief of possible bilious tendencies. If I mention two gallons of home-made pickles, let them be in variety—cucumbers dark with spice or yellow with mustard, bunches of barberry, cauliflower, sweet pickled peaches, cherries, plums, but all well-drained and convenient for handling. All pickles or preserves for picnics should be put up with stems on.

Take a few loaves of bread and a box of butter for people who prefer plain bread and butter with their chicken and cucumbers. It is much nicer freshly cut and spread as wanted. Mild cheese, cut into two-inch bits half an inch thick, will carry well in a napkin in a tin box. Five pounds will probably be enough as the liking for cheese is not universal. Eggs take well in shape of egg sandwiches, sliced when hard boiled between very thin slices of bread and butter, so does veal loaf, which is chopped veal bound together with

beaten egg, and flavored with herbs, then baked in bread pans so that it can be sliced.

No, I shall not forget the cake, and you may depend on its being the only thing that other people will not forget either. It is easy knowing how much to provide. A common scalloped cake pan, ten inches across, will give eighteen good slices, a brick pan of the same length ten slices or fifteen as you choose to cut them. Rich fruit and black cake are not cut over half an inch thick. A dozen loaves in all of cup cake, sponge, chocolate, fruit and lady cake, should be enough for one hundred people, with one hundred and twenty-five little cakes baked in patty pans, which may include pound and currant, Dundee and Marseilles cakes. Twice as many cookies, jumbles, ginger snaps and Brighton biscuit, will prove enough for the most hardened picnic eaters. Jelly cake and fruit tarts are certain to be called for by every one, so ask to have plenty of them, if any are furnished. Where a dozen or twenty families do the baking, it is as little trouble to have things in proportion as to have loads of frosted pound cake and only two or three of anything else.

Beverages in variety are too much trouble for large volunteer parties. Content yourself with lemonade not too sweet, and plenty of ice water for everybody, taking two or three clean casks or kegs along and a basket of cheap tumblers. It is better however for everybody to bring small baskets with napkins, cups and spoons, or whatever extras are fancied. Remember it takes three large lemons to make two quarts of lemonade with the most economical skill, and calculate accordingly. If you must manage with fewer lemons than you like, press them with a lemon squeezer at home and pour boiling water on them, a quart to a dozen lemons. Carry this, lemons and all, in a covered jar, set in a wooden pail, and strain through a linen cloth into the ice water, adding to bring up the strength if required, two or three teaspoonfuls of powdered citric acid, not tartaric. Citric acid is condensed lemon juice anyhow. And don't let any one spoil the lemonade by using anything but white sugar in it. Citric acid and white sugar with the grated peel of three lemons will make better lemonade than the washy stuff usually served, where a dozen lemons float in slices on a half barrel or so of tepid water which

tastes strongly of muscovado sugar. Bottled lemon soda, and cold tea with thin slices of lemon in it, with sugar but no milk are popular, but do have them iced, for flat beverages well sunned in July air savor too much of cheap excursions. Iced milk with the cream in, may be taken in jugs, but the best way of carrying all such things is in a half-barrel or firkins, half filled with pounded ice and sawdust, in which the bottles, jugs and pails can be set, the whole covered with many layers of paper, and a piece of carpet.

Pack the plates and saucers with layers of clean paper between each two, and have thin bars of wood fastened over the top of the basket to hold the pile firmly that it cannot shake and break. Insist that all the tablecloths must be marked with the owners' names, and all the tableware can be marked with initials by a match dipped in turpentine varnish and lampblack, or any black paint that will not wash off at once. An hour spent at the vestry marking all things sent will save a week's trouble hunting and returning stray articles, beside endless heart burnings over lost property.

If you must have hot tea and coffee, or hot bouillion

or chowder, which are popular picnic fare in different parts of the country, the easiest way to get them up is to carry a kerosene stove and light it in the wagon which takes the baskets. A shelter is easily rigged in the fashion of emigrant wagons, with a light frame covered by unbleached cotton or awning cloth, which makes the cook business lighter, for it is no easy matter to boil coffee and make soup with the wind puffing smoke in one's face from every quarter.

If you want the older ladies to enjoy the picnic, and go home without fatigue and neuralgic twinges, provide all the canvas camp-chairs, mats and pieces of carpets possible to give people easy seats. Hammocks and swing-chairs add much to the real comfort of such parties, for to tell the truth, most of us elders enjoy our easy-chairs out of the draft, on our own shady piazzas, better than any picnic between here and Galveston, and the younger folk are not averse to something better than a backless seat on the ground, with the damp striking through thin dresses.

It ought to be understood that a simple, durable style of dress is the only one for picnics and wood parties. Let white muslin and organdy suits be

frowned down as bad taste, and pretty summer flannels, satines and prints be worn instead. With bright ribbons and flowers such dresses are festal enough for any occasion of the kind, nor should wraps be forgotten in case of sudden change in the weather. Have these all ticketed with the owner's name on a tag, tied up in close parcels and sent in the store wagon with the baskets and picnic equipage generally. A locked box will prove the safest thing to carry them in and it should be the business of some careful young fellow to look after the contents and deliver them, as an expressman hands out parcels. If your party is a large one, of a hundred or over, a system of checks for wraps will be the easiest and safest for everybody. You can't have any fun without these cares, and it is so much easier taking care before than after — always. A summer shower comes up, or the wind changes, and people are distracted trying to find shawls and cloaks, unless they "hang on to them" as the prudent ones do, and spoil their comfort carrying wraps all day.

What is left at picnics ought not to be wasted in the wholesale manner common. I have seen wagon loads of young people pelting each other with the half-

hundred cream cakes left from lunch, and after a soldiers' lunch furnished by the town ladies on parade-day, the regiments have flung barrels of sandwich rolls at each other for sport. Good taste and thrift forbid such monkeyish performances. What is left should be at the disposal of those who sent it, if they can distinguish their own cake and rolls, or it should be neatly packed and sent to families where such a treat would be acceptable—to those who stayed at home with young children and the sick, or to people who didn't think themselves good enough to go to picnics, and who don't have cake every day. The *débris*, instead of disfiguring the grounds, should be collected in a box and go to somebody's chickens, for the sake of keeping the picnic grounds orderly, and no stray papers or tin cans should be left as traces that well-bred Christian people have been feasting there.

Why not send things to the minister? Of course you send them, not because the minister's family is a dependent and beneficiary of the parish, but because a good deal more is expected from them than other folks, in the way of entertaining and giving time to others, and it is only just you should help them in every

thoughtful way. With people coming to dine, or take tea, almost any day in the week, it will be a decided help to have loaves of nice cake that will keep for weeks in the cake box, or a basket of rolls and cookies that make luncheon easy for days. You do not know how the minister's wife has her time broken by calls on parish matters or charity, so that it is not always easy for her to do a forenoon's baking uninterrupted. She will do her work, and your work, better for all the helps and attentions thrown in her way. But don't forget the washerwoman, and the poor family down by the mill, who never come to church, or the old ladies who live alone, or the sick mother whose family of boys are doing the housework the best they can without her, or the sewing women who live on a cup of tea and bread mainly. The fragments are sometimes the best of the feast.



#### XXIV. — HELPS THAT ARE HELPS.

THE Gaylor girls were congratulating you last night that your mother had decided on account of her poor health to keep a girl this summer. They thought it absurd in you to follow the old habit of doing the work yourself, and vowed "no one should ever see them do a hand's turn for themselves so long as they could pay somebody to do it for them." A fine sentiment, that has the right ring of American republicanism about it, that does equal honor to their heads and hearts. When every move in business is toward cheaper prices and economical styles of living, when fire, flood or panic may in one afternoon cut off the finest incomes, our women and girls, safe, sheltered for the time, think it becoming and ladylike to say such shallow things and live up to them. The only safe rule is to allow no one to do anything for you that you can do for yourself, while turning your time and abil-

ity to the best account. Two women in fair health can divide the housekeeping of a plain family with comfort and time for other pursuits. If one is disabled, the occasion is clear for outside help, but to you and me the necessity is one to grieve over, as Sin Saxon, in Leslie Goldthwaite's beautiful story, dreaded to have a servant come and derange her trim housekeeping. If you could get one of the nice country girls with a moral antipathy to dirt and a bent toward scrubbing, bred to quickness and thrift, it would be better than miners' luck. I've had such "help," to give them their grateful old name, a sunny-faced girl in clean calico gown, who cooked a good breakfast, served it and had the dining-room in speckless order, the kitchen tidy and house settled by nine o'clock every day — she would have been disgraced in her own eyes not to have her work done up by nine o'clock in the morning — who could see when things needed tearing up and putting to rights, and had an instinct and energy which left her no rest till everything was in order. She had no fear of doing what wasn't her work ; she could cook bread, steak, vegetables to perfection, make pies and jumbles no pantry need blush

to own, and if she wasn't gifted in garnishing with dabs of beet, boiled egg and parsley, her dishes, platters and napkins were always clean, and it didn't take away your appetite to go into her kitchen just as she was taking up dinner, for no chaos of dirty dish-towels, and parings, spatters of grease and cinders surrounded her cooking. She had the gift of faculty and habit of using it. This is what you must look for if you want help worth paying.

For it is not a one-sided bargain you are making. You get the services of a woman trained to nothing better than the use of her hands and muscles in domestic work, at any rate one who can do nothing else for the time. For this you pay from eight to twelve or fifteen dollars a month according to her skill or the scarcity of help—but that is the least part of what you give her. She fares as well as you as to food, a decent room and comforts are a matter of course, and you bear the expense of her inexperience, carelessness, and perhaps her ill health. Your house-keeping will cost one third more at least, with even a tolerable servant—so far girls know how to use supplies without waste. All these things count in the

wages of an apprentice or workman — they rightly should in the servant girl's account.

For your sake, as well as her own, you are bound to treat her with consideration. No woman with good feelings will put a girl to sleep in a dark airless hole in the basement, or an attic out of repair without common furniture. You must give her a clean, airy room and good bed, and have her keep it so. It is a good rule to have every servant who leaves wash the thinner blankets and quilts, air the bed thoroughly and scrub the room for the next who comes. If she found it clean for herself she will rarely object to do this for another of her own class. I use the word class as a convenience, but I detest the unchristian, unladylike idea that the women of any sort or nation differ from the highest rank, save in circumstances only. Give your hired girl who does your hard work a good bed to rest on, and a cheap set of springs under it, for one recovers strength better in an easy bed. The furniture may be plain, second hand, but not battered, dusty or greasy. Have a glass large enough to comb her hair and pin her collar by comfortably—no pinched seven-by-nine affair. Let her have a stand,

bureau, rocking-chair or at least a low chair, and a closet or ample rack for her dresses. A bare floor with carpet by the bed is kept clean easily, and she will hardly thank you for giving her a carpeted room to sweep. She will appreciate little things like a clean towel on the bureau, a tidy on the rocker, a gay hair-receiver and a white spread on the bed. If you had to sleep often in rooms with fusty, rickety old furniture, with bare, stained bureau and table, and grimy patch quilts, you would appreciate a neat bright room to yourself, and be careful how you had to leave it. If the room is nice you can with better grace in her eyes insist on its being kept neat, and you will have to teach every girl that comes to throw off the bed-clothes, turn up the mattress and open the window before she goes down in the morning. She may leave the bed unmade till she gets into it at night—that is her own lookout—but she must empty slops and leave the room airing the first thing. It is easy to take the clean slop-pail up at night and bring it down when she goes to light the fires, and then it is over for the day, and the room does not gather indescribable smells that makes the sleeper in it stupid and

heavy in the morning. Have plenty of bedclothes, and an old quilt folded under the sheet, both to be easy to sleep on and to keep the bed clean. See that the girl has a hot soapstone or brick wrapped up to warm her bed in cold nights. It takes the chill off a cold room and bed, and often prevents taking cold which unfits one for working comfortably. Take care that she has umbrella and rubbers to go out with in stormy weather, teach her not to rush out of a heated kitchen to the yard with bare head and arms chilly days, and give her good chance for baths with a warm room and hot water, for nothing makes one feel more active and like work than a hot bath. Make one rule: that your help must go to bed at ten o'clock, unless on special occasions, and have nothing done evenings in stirring-about work except to mix some little thing for breakfast. Teach her that she can peel apples and vegetables or fold clothes just as well sitting down, for she cannot be on her feet all day and keep sprightly for work. The hours of kitchen help begin earlier and end later than those of any other employment, and should be made equal by giving time for rest and pleasure in the afternoon, *provided* the

housework is properly done, as it should be, before two o'clock.

That brings the question, how much one woman should be expected to do. In a plain family a well-trained servant ought to get all the meals and clear them away, do all the washing, ironing, cleaning and sweeping, keep entrances neat and wait on the door bell most of the time. I know perfectly well that half the girls from intelligence offices say they can't do this, and in a house with modern conveniences will make a day's work of getting three simple meals and clearing away, keeping the family on famine diet washing day, and finishing the ironing at 9.30 Saturday night, after a fashion. The ordinary "first-class cook," puffy and fat, is all day peeling her turnips and carrots for a plain boiled dinner, and resents being asked to sweep an entry or clear a front door. When you get such a woman to work, you have made a great mistake. What the ordinary American family needs is what the intelligence offices call a girl for general housework, and don't get a plump one. A light, wiry girl will get through work in half the time that a fat one will, without half the fatigue.

In your family of six, the boys ought to get up the kindling and coal, take down and sift the ashes, and tend the furnace or sitting-room stove. It will take them fifteen minutes a day in all, and the care won't hurt them. Your trim kitchen maid should be up at five in summer and half-past five or six in winter as you need an early breakfast. She should have the sitting and dining-rooms tidy, which should want little more than sweeping about the stove, and dusting, the door-steps swept, and breakfast ready by seven, with the kitchen nearly ready for ironing or baking. She can hand the cups and plates at breakfast, then hurry up-stairs and empty slops from the bedrooms — work which *must* be done early — then eat her own breakfast which should be in the kitchen with her own separate tablecloth and napkin. A good servant will keep her kitchen nice enough for anybody to eat in, and there should be a small table to eat from, beside the regular kitchen table which is wanted for work. Half an hour is time enough for her to wash the breakfast dishes and have the dining-room tidy. There is no sense in the way heavy-footed girls drag about this work till eleven in the forenoon. I've seen



a table for twenty persons cleared and dishes all washed in ten minutes by the clock, seen biscuit made and baked and breakfast got in fifteen minutes, a cup cake stirred up and baked in eight minutes by lively farmer girls whose pride was in their work, and who would have a washing of six white shirts, twelve sheets, six white skirts, with body and table linen for a family of nine persons, all on the line by ten o'clock, and spend the afternoon at the piano, or go visiting. They used Doctor Holmes' rule, to work briskly while they worked and rest well when it was done. With all my heart I pity these droning servants who keep on their feet all day, spinning the work out till ten o'clock or midnight, do less and feel thrice as tired as they need. Better by far get a willing greenhorn, and teach her how to work, making the agreement that she is to stay long enough to make it worth while to train her, or forfeit part of her wages. If she learns well, raise her wages as she deserves every three months till she makes the full pay of a good servant. Don't be a screw in prices, but don't make the mistake of thinking that a girl who won't do well anyhow will improve by raising her wages.

Try to teach the girl to make work easy for herself wash-days by putting clothes to soak the night before in warm strong suds, and having the wash-boiler full of water on the stove the night before, where it will be hot in the morning; and on ironing days by seeing that stove, irons and table are clean, and clothes sprinkled the evening before; teach her order in piling up dishes, in marshaling her pots and pans, and how to keep tidy in the midst of work. Do a little with her, and she will catch your brisk step and turn of hand; then insist on her sitting down in the middle of the forenoon for an hour about some light work, or with the newspaper if the work is done. The time is not lost to you when she is resting and you may show her that you do not feel it so. But you must for her sake as well as your own, exact careful business-like performance of her work while she is about it. She is not to make your house anything but homelike with her slovenly sweeping, and untidy paint, dull fires and poorly cooked meals, with the discomfort of work forever going on. Treat her well, and you have a right to be teated well by her, and to have your work done to suit you.

The daughters of the house, in a large family, ought to take the care of their own rooms, the parlor and guest chamber, iron their own muslins and laces perhaps, make the cake, polish silver, and answer the door bell when necessary, beside washing china, setting table and doing light work as convenience requires. The work can be so divided as to be a burden to nobody. In small families who do not live pretentiously, one good servant will do all the work comfortably, keeping the house neat, serving meals well, and being herself presentable for waiting on table and door.

Don't be afraid to treat a good servant kindly. Seldom praise directly, but treat her as if you were contented, and be friendly, as I am happy to say, most American people are with their dependents. It looks well to see young ladies going to evening lecture, church sociable or concert with the tidy maid, whose cheerful face shows she is happy to be with them. — Don't you remember how kind Mrs. Carlyle — that model housekeeper whom one can't help quoting — was to her little Scotch servant whom she took for a companion one day to the National Art Gallery in

London, bringing home by way of compensation that immortal criticism of a Madonna from the enraptured lassie: "O my! how expensive!" Don't be afraid of being kind to your servants, or of treating them like the same sort of humanity as yourself, for you will lose too much by the contrary course. "The pithiest, quaintest turns of language, the most caustic wit, the most touching pathos in the world," says a deep observer, "I have heard not from the educated and refined lady in her drawing-room, but from hard-working women of the lower class, from the lips perhaps of a washer-woman or of a maid servant who could hardly spell out her letters from home, or the chapter from her Bible of a Sunday." Don't keep an ordinary "tolerable" sort of girl if you can help it; there are enough good ones in the world to be found by seeking. Treat yourself to good help if you have any—and choose a girl to whom you can feel like being her best friend. Then see that she treats you well, does your work as you want it done, makes you comfortable, and makes her labor tolerable to herself. You are entitled to this, and it is no kindness to her to allow things to go on slack fashion. Train her, as I have

said, to system and despatch which shorten her hours of work, and make work itself more interesting. Teach her your nice ways, telling her the right thing to do from the first. It is easier to direct than to correct. Take the lead for two or three days and show her how the table is to be set and served, how to make the coffee and bake the potatoes, and tell her that she is to knock on entering the family rooms. It is the hardest thing to teach American girls that they cannot, in a well-bred family, bounce into sitting-room or chamber as unceremoniously as they please. They may tap and enter without farther signal, in sitting-room or parlor, but no person, relative or servant, will enter the bedroom of another without knocking and waiting till bidden "Come in."

The good servants are not all dead, and they make fortunate homes where they stay. Don't pass over faults that can be corrected—do not grudge any kindness in your power to make their lives as comfortable as you want yours.

Whether life will be this or the other thing depends on the woman who reigns in the kitchen. For you can't even read a newspaper with satisfaction if

you have had no breakfast fit to eat, and you can't color a picture when your head aches with sitting in a chilly room because the kitchen girl has let the furnace fire get down, and you can't ask company if she declines to know how to wait on them, and you can't go to the Wagner Festival with any pleasure if "she" gives warning and goes off the same morning and leaves you with the work on hand and lunch to get, nor can you study or write in peace if "she" keeps bouncing in about trifling orders just as they happen to come into her head. Don't you know Beethoven's life was ruined by worthless servants, and that poor Hannah More's fortune was eaten up by them, and more than one woman meeting the world single-handed loses all the money and the comfort she earns for want of one good and trusty servant? Thank heaven, that can hardly befall you or me, Anna Maria, for we can always be sure of one good servant—the best of all—*one's self*.

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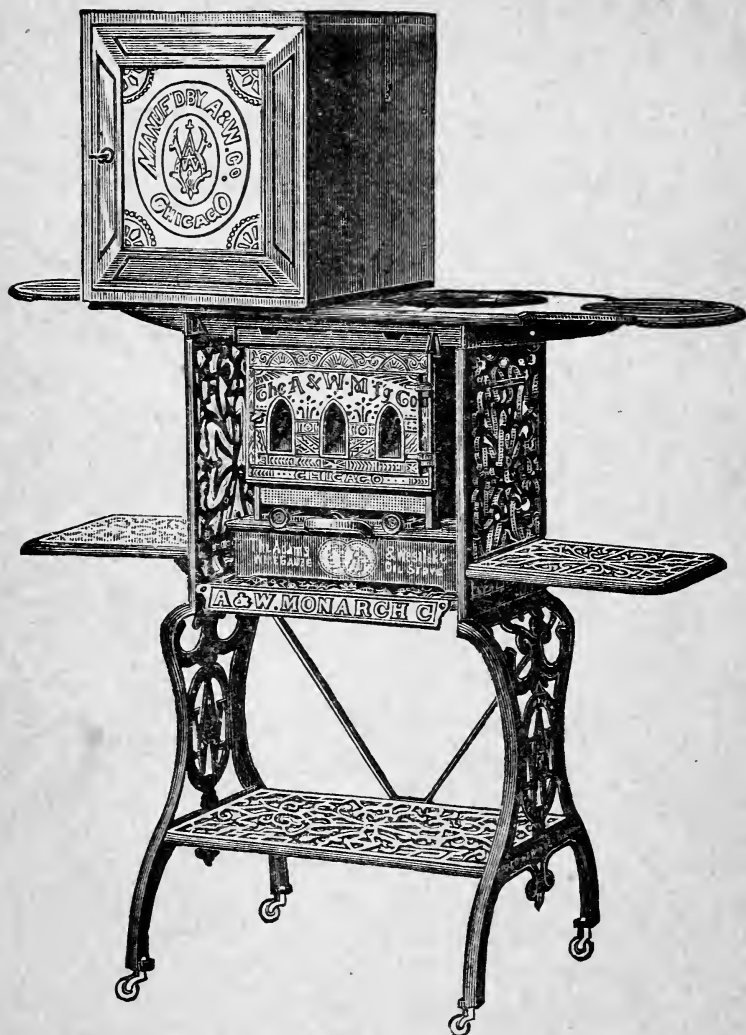


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